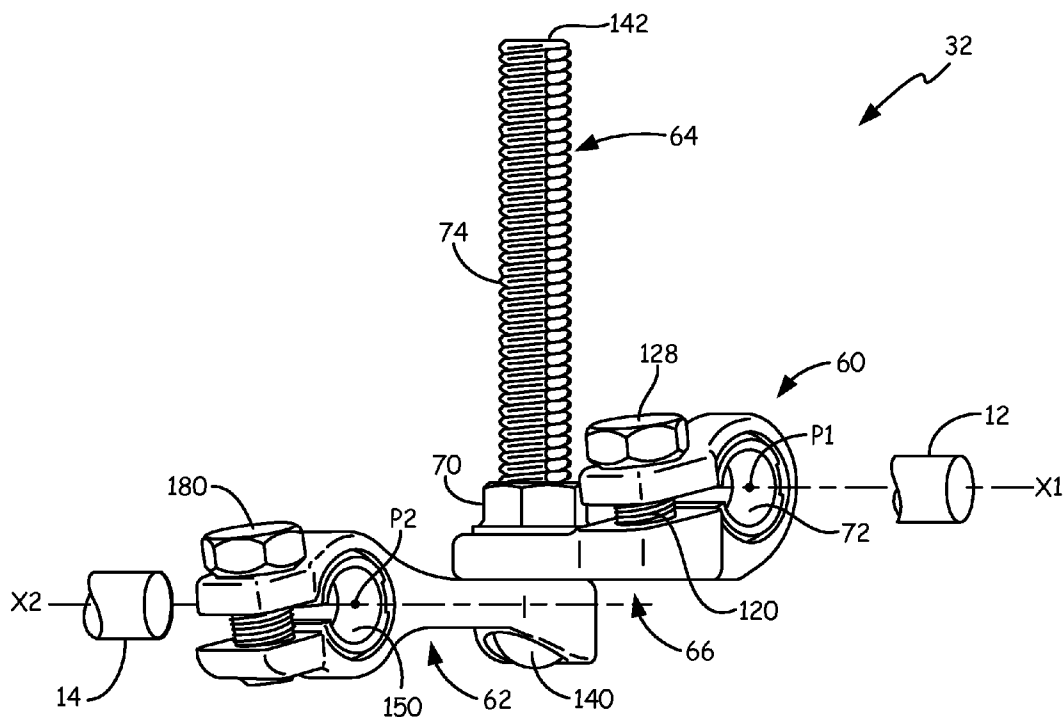




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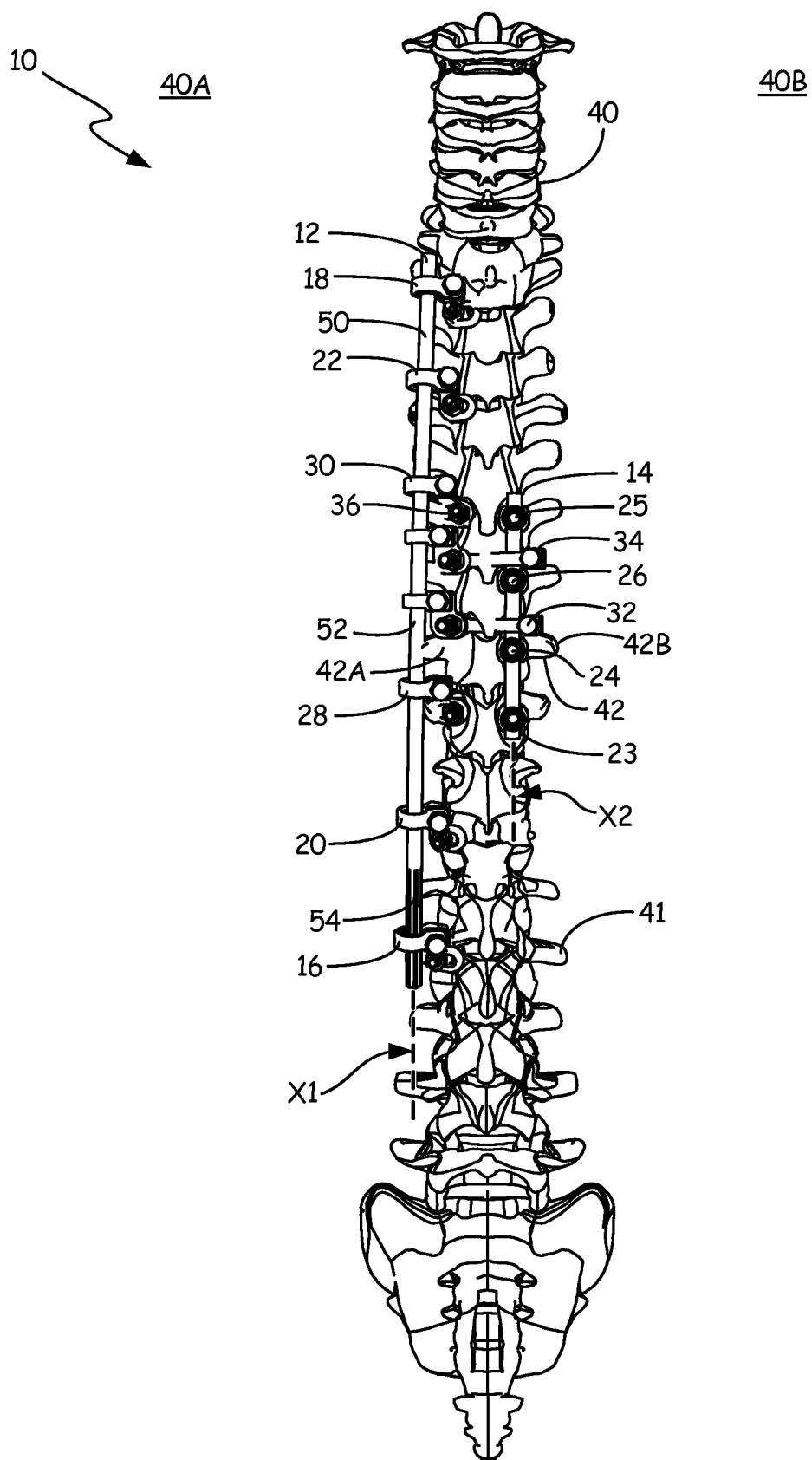
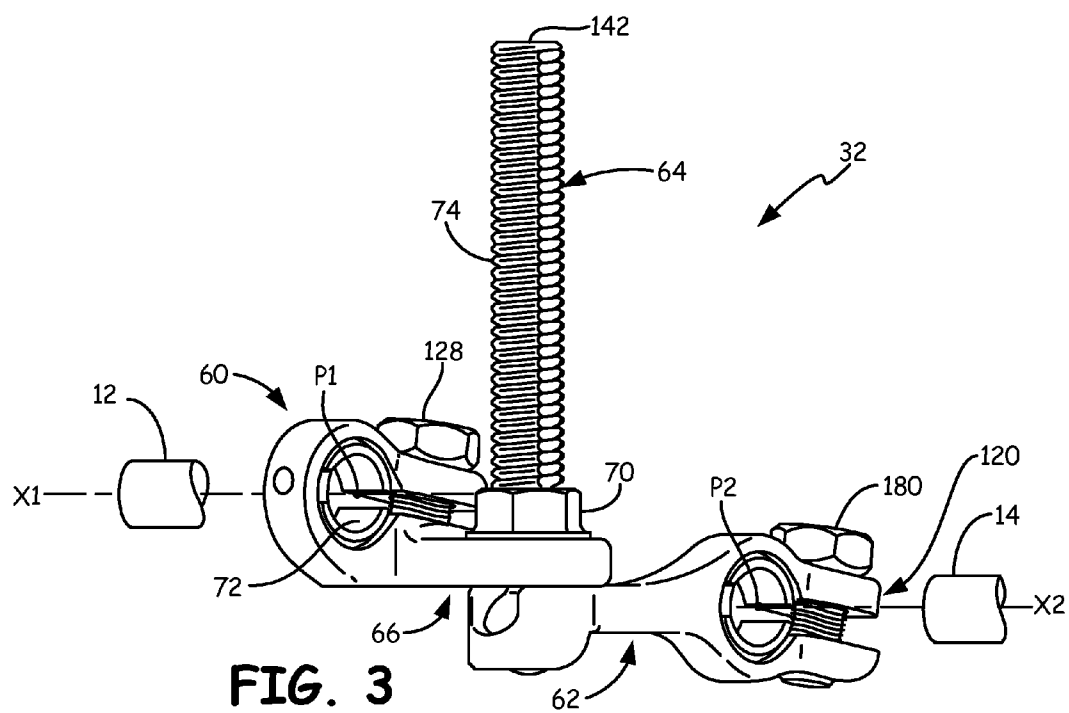
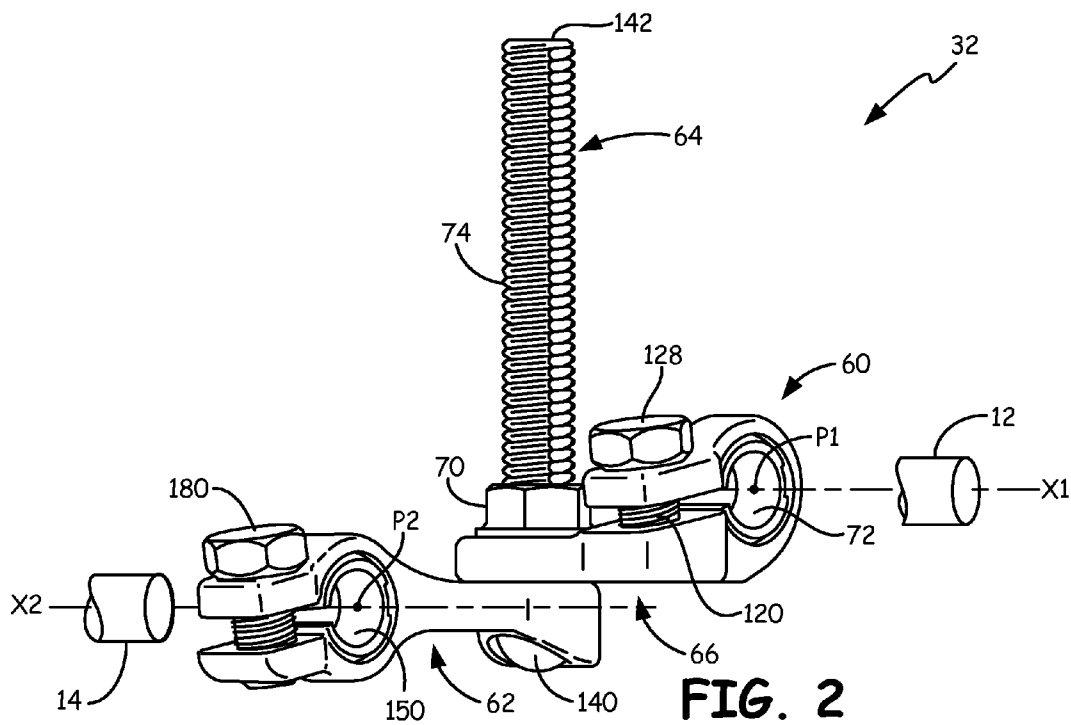


FIG. 1



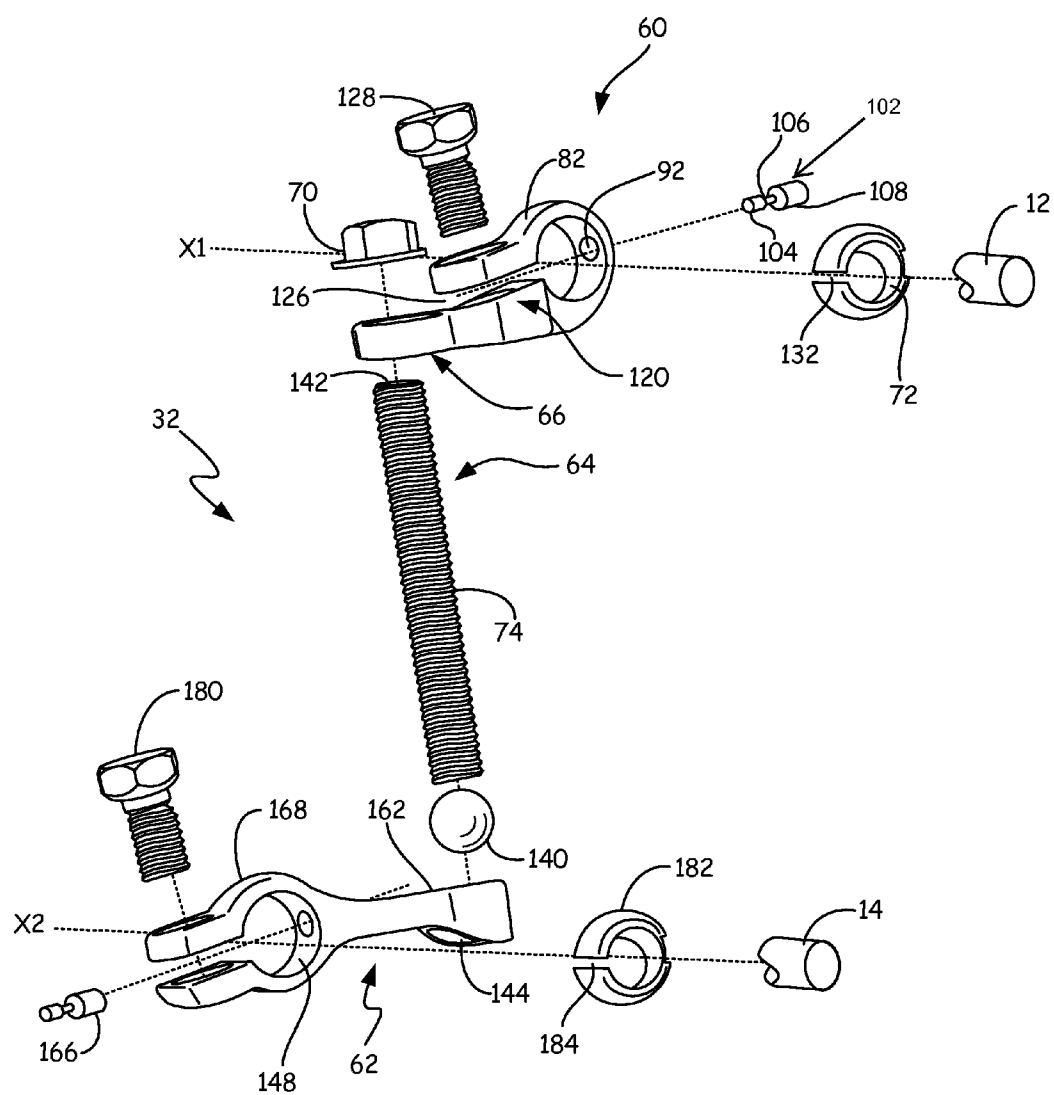


FIG. 4

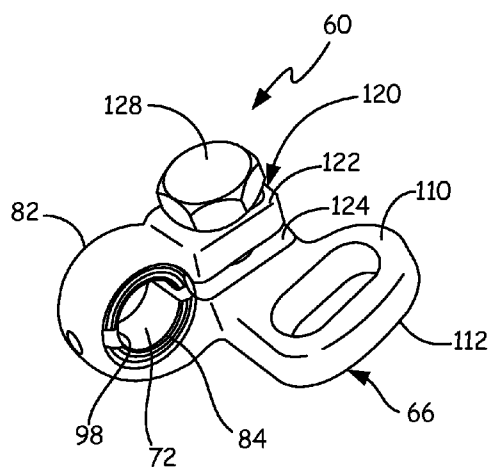


FIG. 5

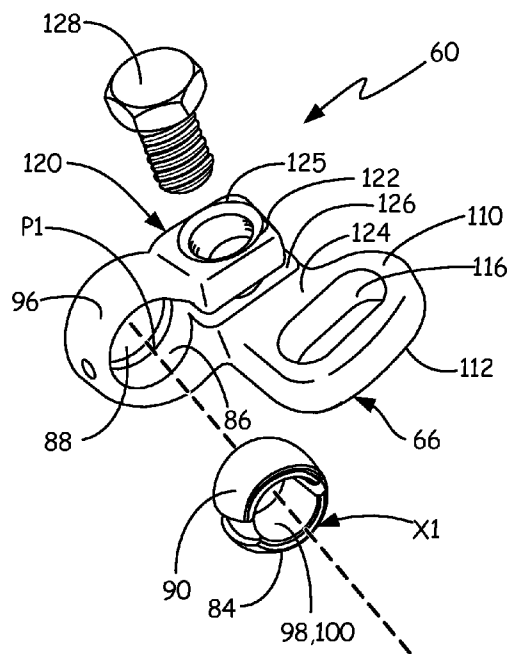


FIG. 6

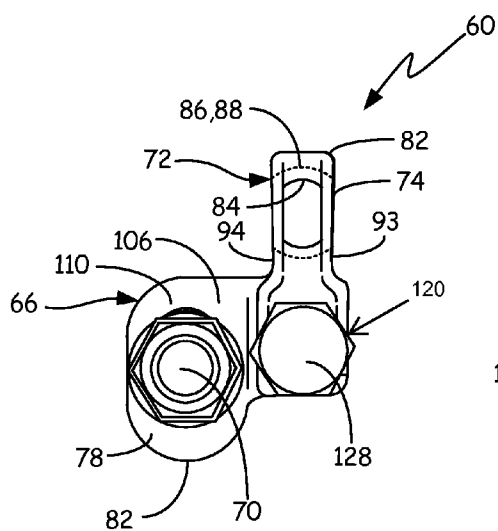


FIG. 7

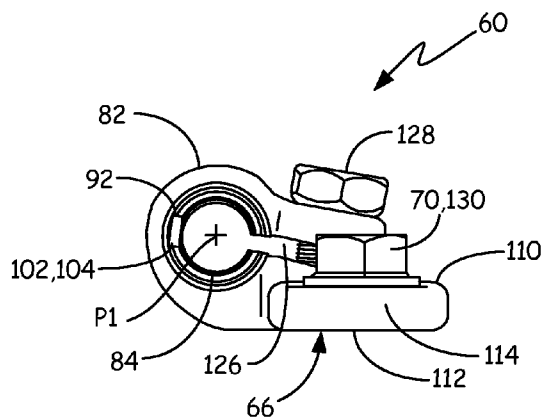


FIG. 8

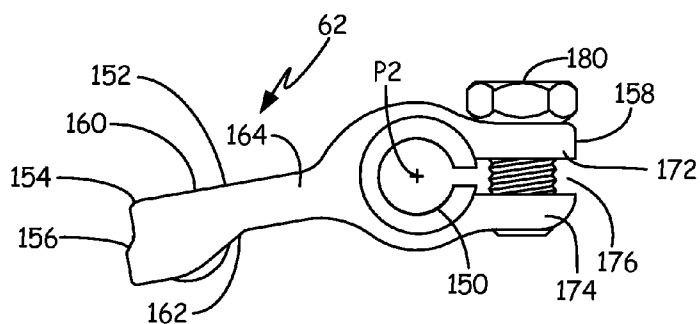


FIG. 9

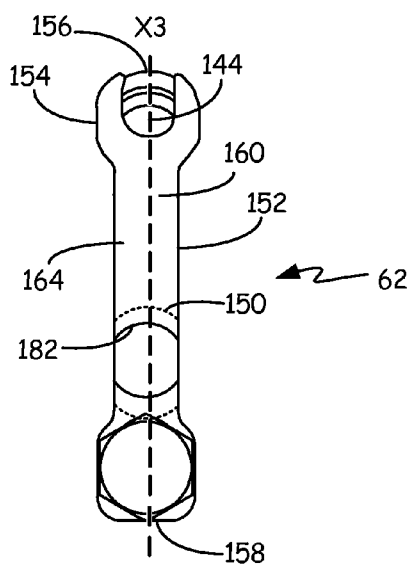


FIG. 10

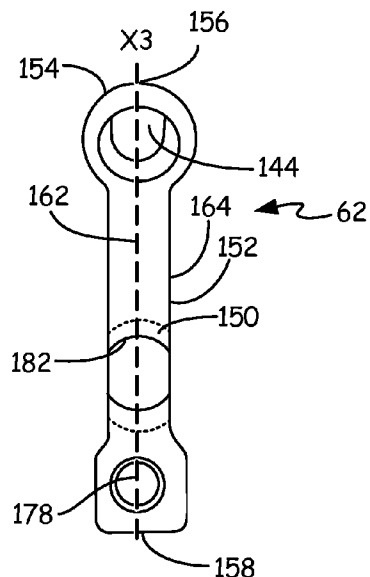


FIG. 11

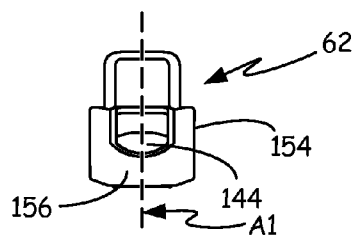
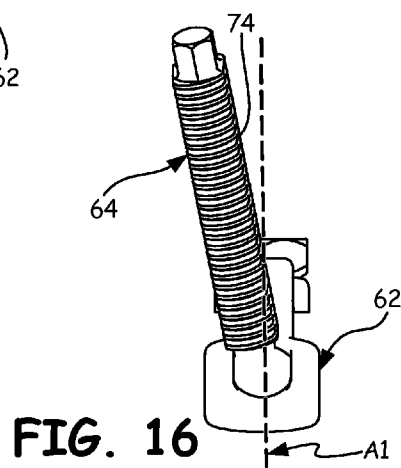
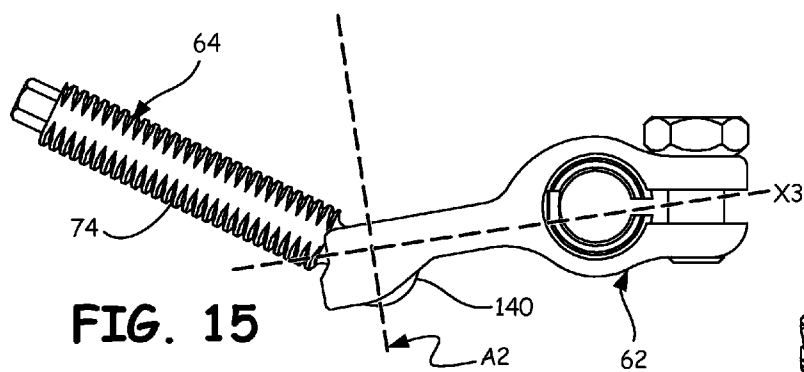
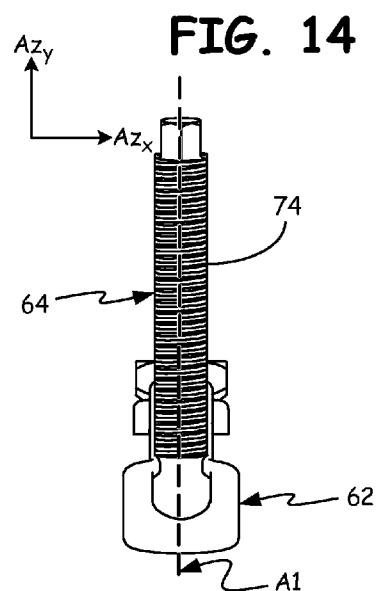
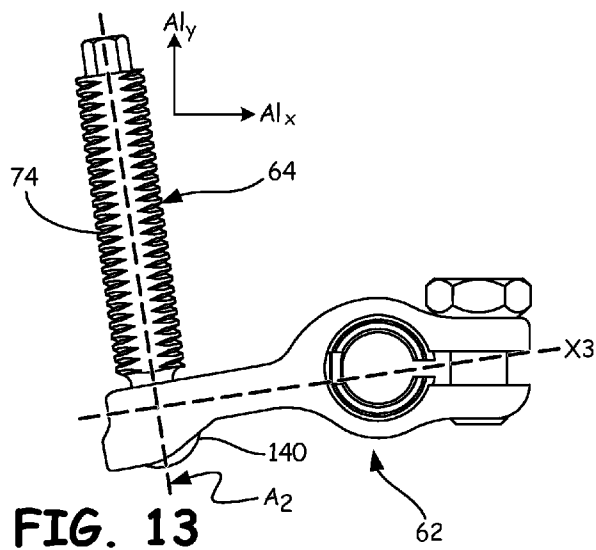
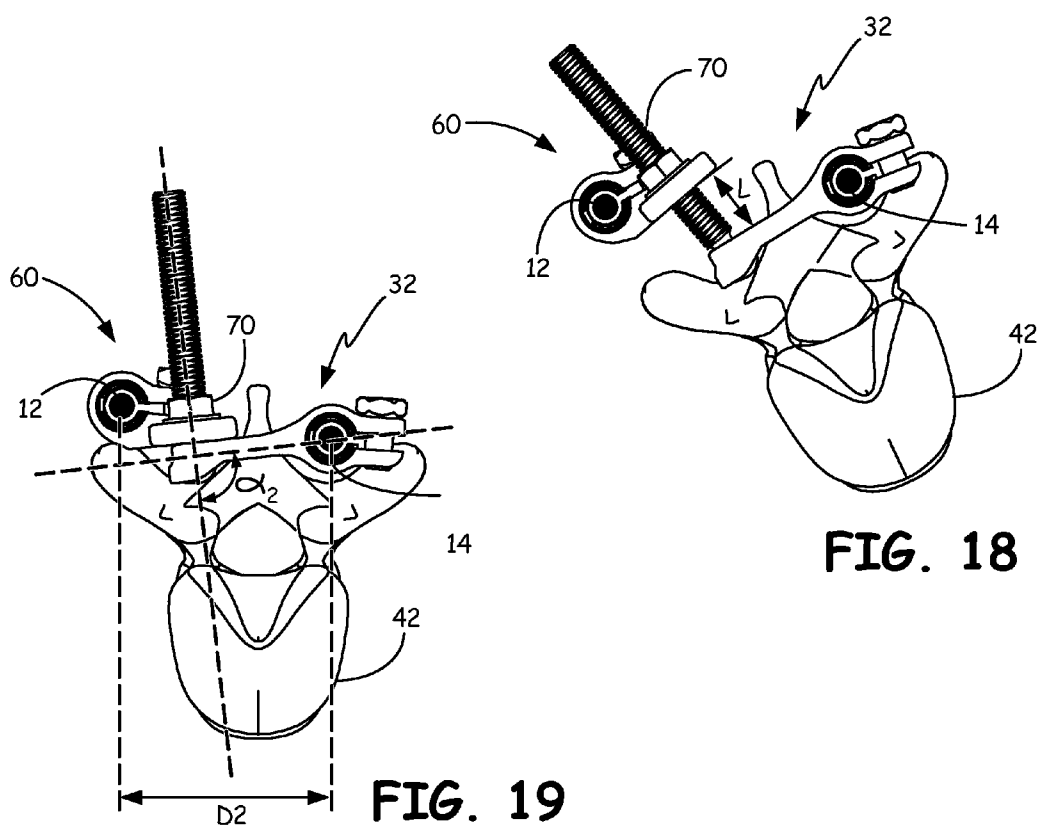
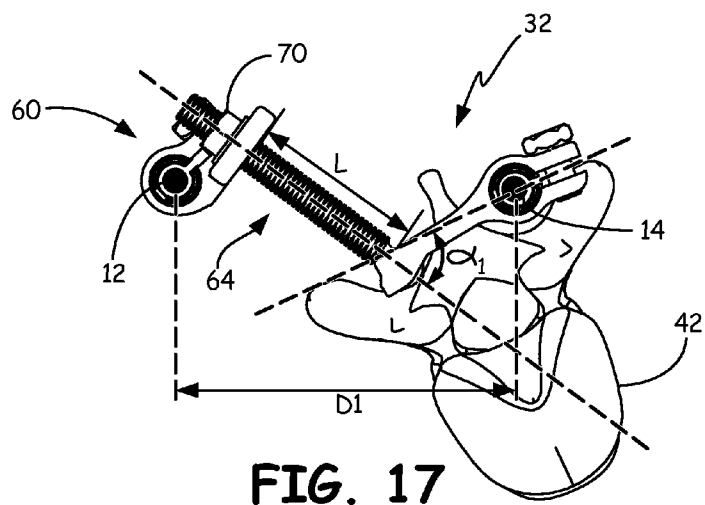


FIG. 12





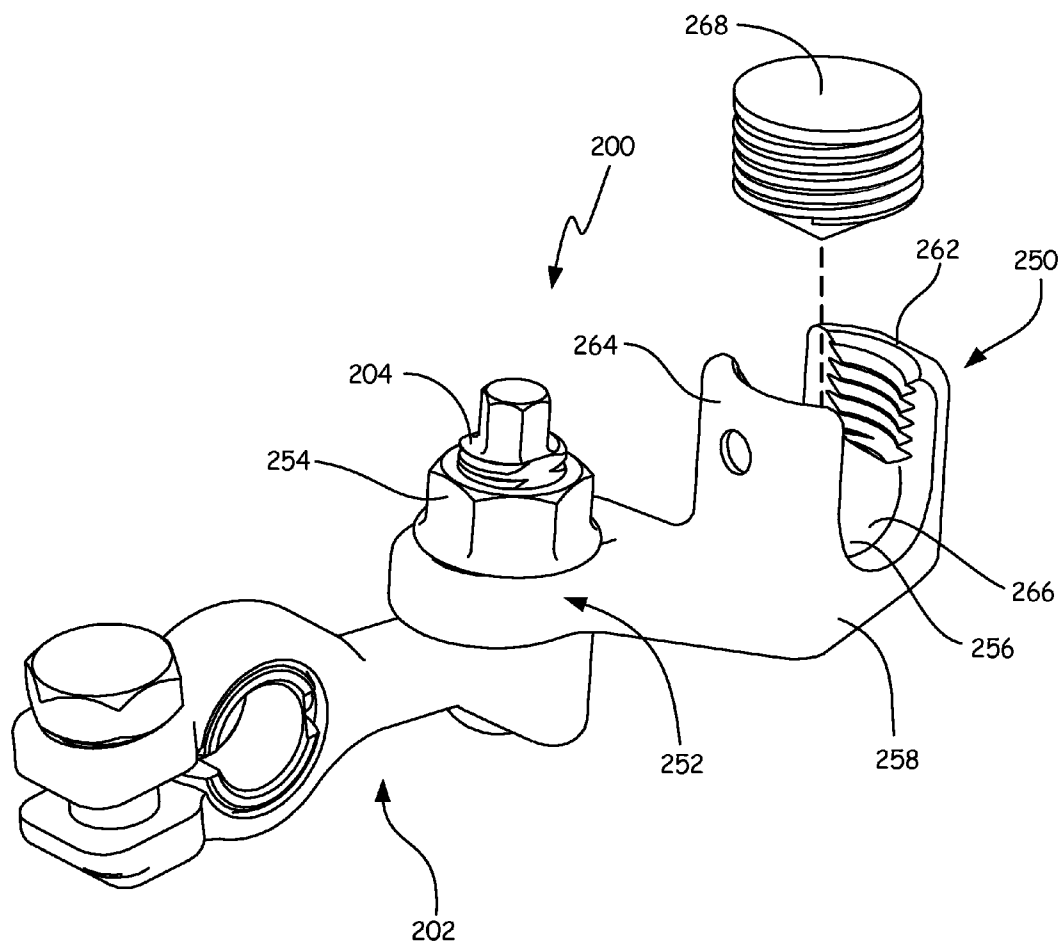


FIG. 20

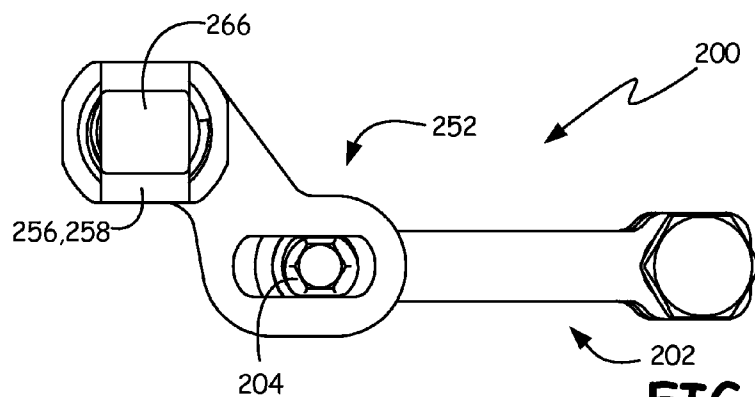


FIG. 21

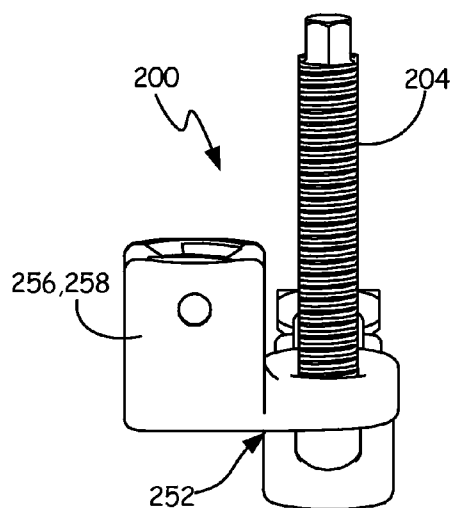


FIG. 22

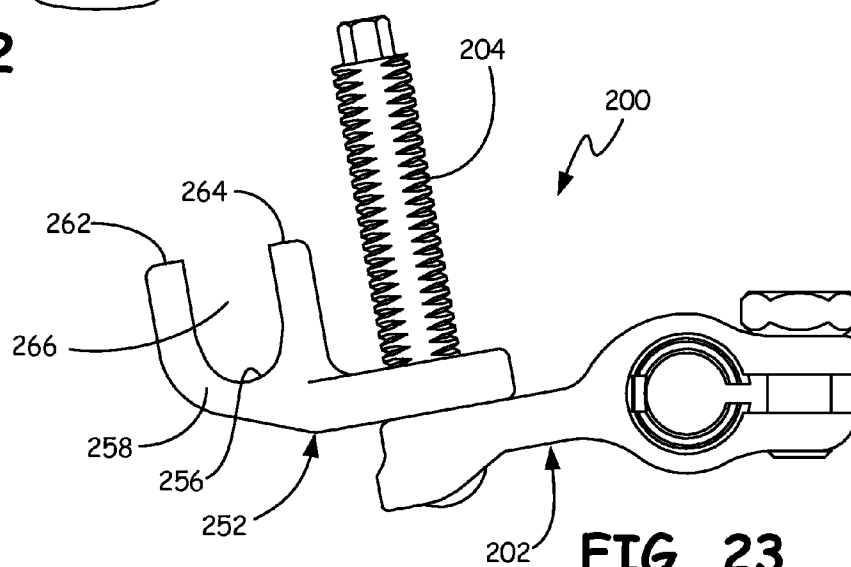


FIG. 23

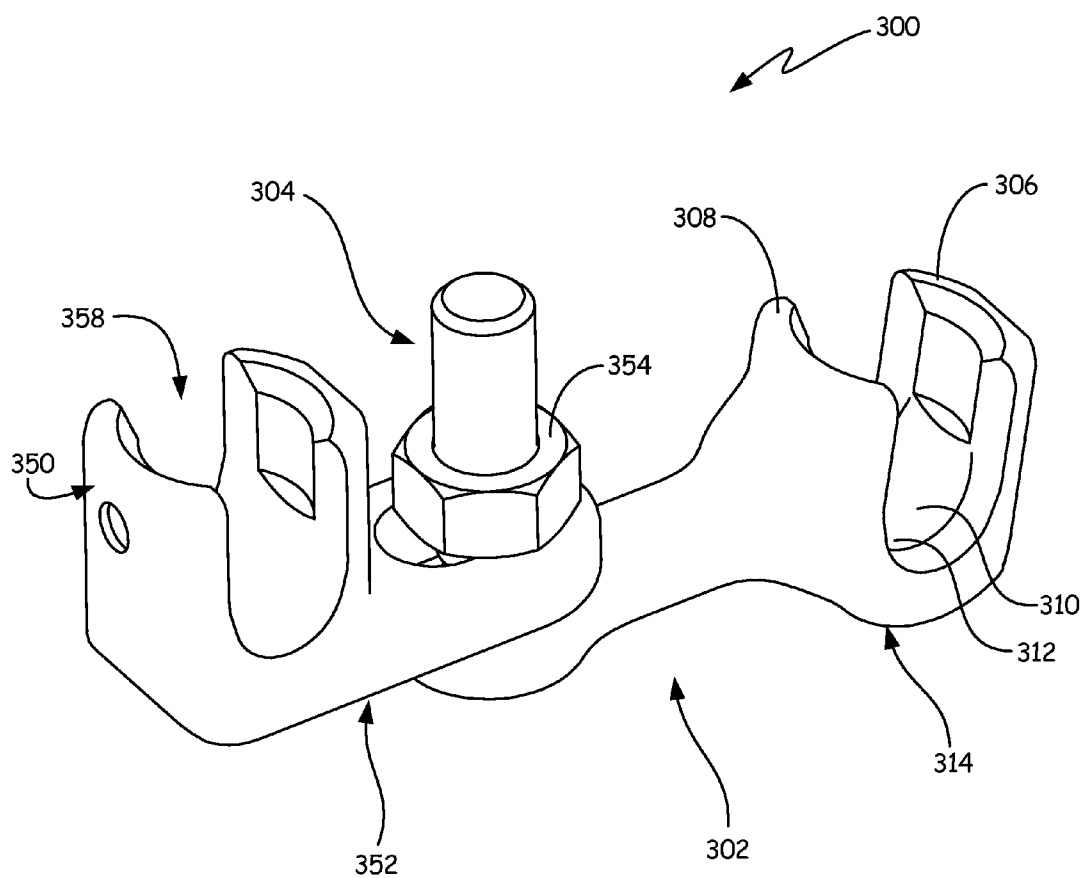


FIG. 24

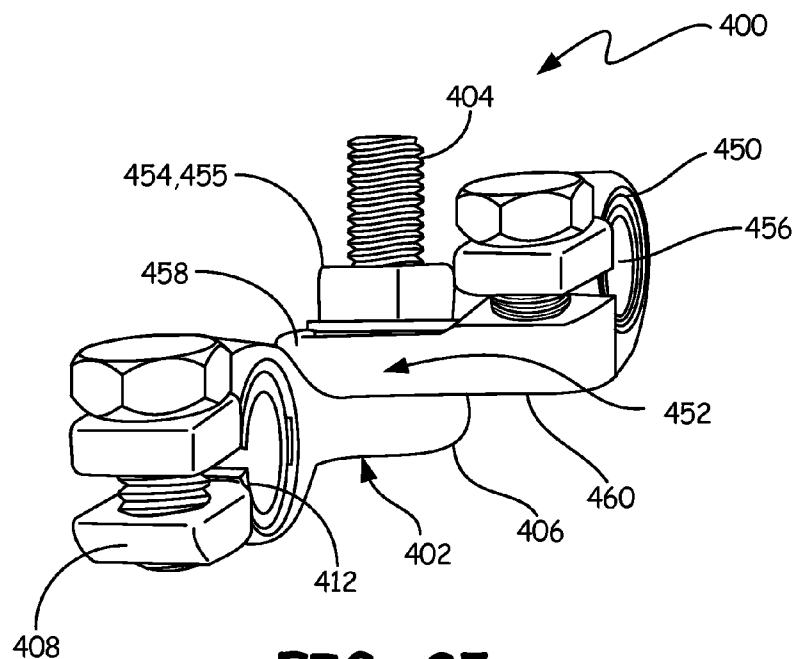


FIG. 25

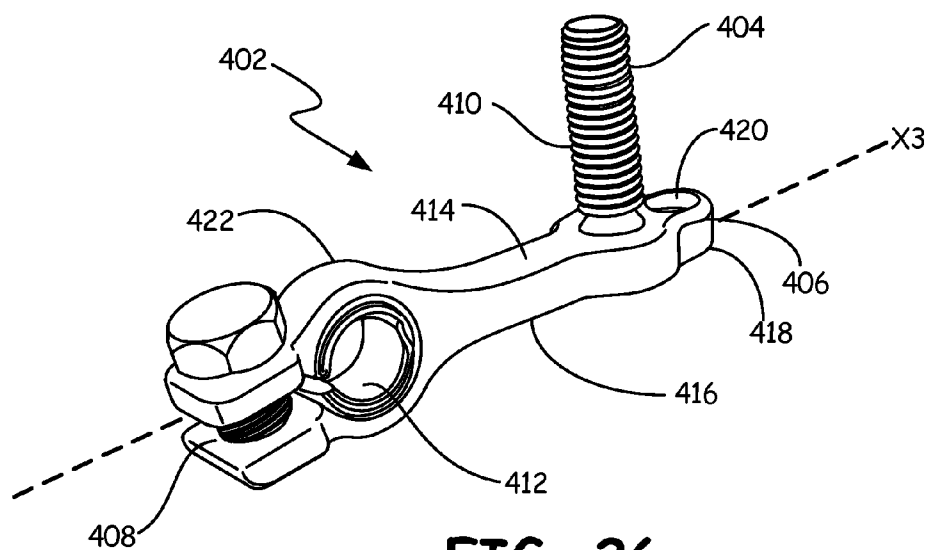


FIG. 26

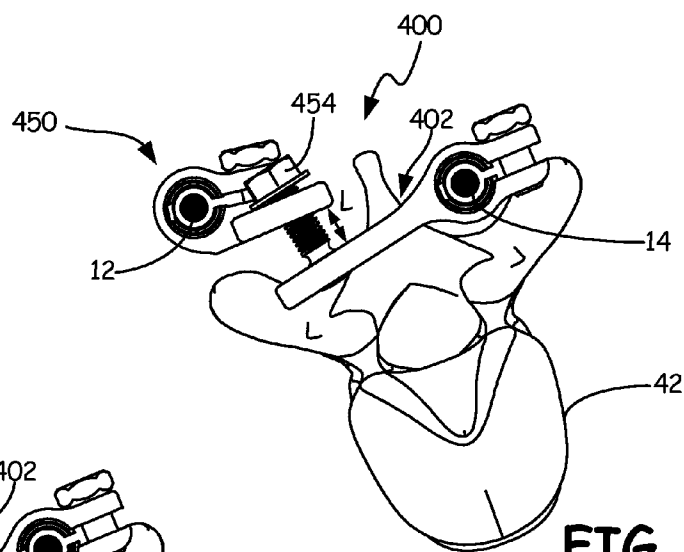


FIG. 27

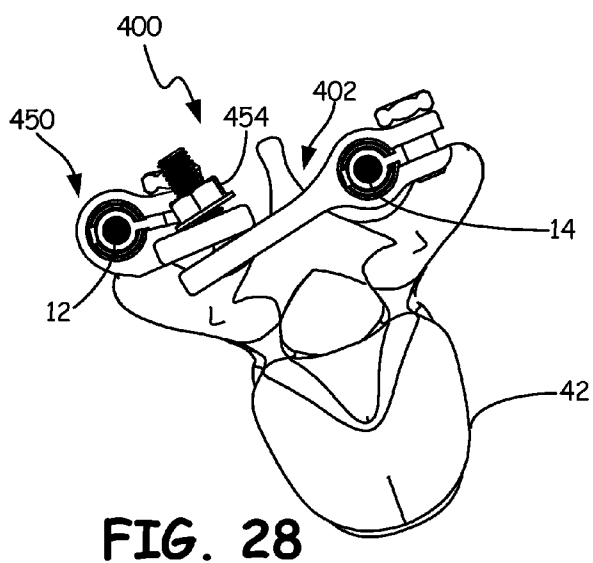


FIG. 28

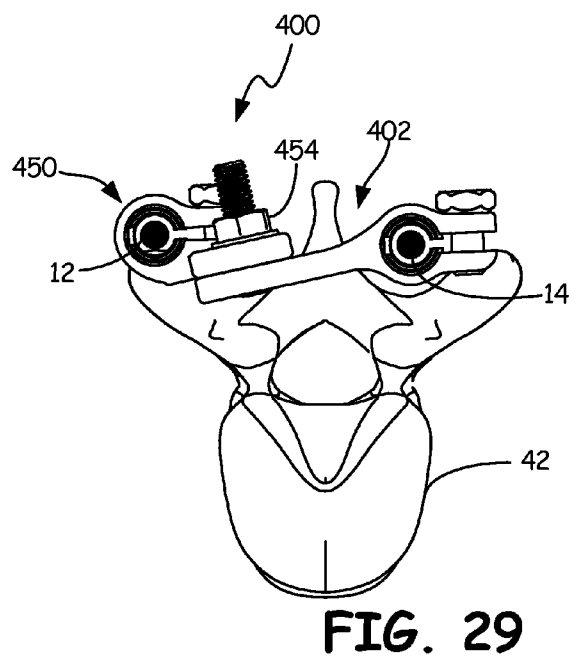


FIG. 29

TRANSVERSE COUPLER ADJUSTER SPINAL CORRECTION SYSTEMS AND METHODS

BACKGROUND

[0001] Many systems have been utilized to treat spinal deformities such as scoliosis, spondylolisthesis, and a variety of others. Primary surgical methods for correcting a spinal deformity utilize instrumentation to correct the deformity, as well as implantable hardware systems to rigidly stabilize and maintain the correction.

SUMMARY

[0002] Some embodiments relate to systems, devices, and associated methods for correcting spinal column deformities that promote ease of use and surgical technique, help minimize attachment anchor sites, facilitate use of straight or contoured rods, and/or help promote a more natural, physiologic motion of the spinal column as an adjunct to fusion or non-fusion treatment methods.

[0003] Some embodiments relate to a spinal correction system including a rod, a force directing member, an adjustment assembly and an adjustment arm. The rod is optionally adapted to extend longitudinally along a spine of a patient. In some embodiments, the force directing member defines a length and has a body that is substantially elongate and rigid. The adjustment assembly optionally includes a rider, a first rod coupler and an adjustment retainer. The rider is adapted to couple to the body of the force directing member such that the rider is moveable along the body as desired. The first rod coupler is optionally adapted to be secured to the rod and substantially constrained by the rod against substantial lateral translation. The adjustment retainer is optionally adapted to be adjustably secured along the length of the force directing member. The adjustment arm adapted to extend from a second side of the spine toward the first side of the spine, in some embodiments. The adjustment arm optionally defines a first portion adapted to be secured on the second side of the spine and a second portion adapted to be coupled to the force directing member.

[0004] This summary is not meant to be limiting in nature. While multiple embodiments are disclosed herein, still other embodiments of the present invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from the following detailed description, which shows and describes illustrative embodiments of the invention. Accordingly, the drawings and detailed description are to be regarded as illustrative in nature and not restrictive.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0005] FIG. 1 is a schematic illustration of an implantable spinal correction and fusion system, according to some embodiments.

[0006] FIG. 2 is an isometric view of a transverse coupler of the system of FIG. 1, according to some embodiments.

[0007] FIG. 3 is an isometric view of the transverse coupler of FIG. 2, according to some embodiments.

[0008] FIG. 4 is an exploded view of the transverse coupler of FIG. 2, according to some embodiments.

[0009] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a rider of the transverse coupler of FIG. 2, according to some embodiments.

[0010] FIG. 6 is an exploded view of the rider of FIG. 5, according to some embodiments.

[0011] FIG. 7 is a top view of the rider of FIG. 5, according to some embodiments.

[0012] FIG. 8 is a side view of the rider of FIG. 5, according to some embodiments.

[0013] FIG. 9 is a side view of an adjustment arm of the transverse coupler of FIG. 2, according to some embodiments.

[0014] FIG. 10 is a top view of the adjustment arm of FIG. 9, according to some embodiments.

[0015] FIG. 11 is a bottom view of the adjustment arm of FIG. 9, according to some embodiments.

[0016] FIG. 12 is a rear view of the adjustment arm of FIG. 9, according to some embodiments.

[0017] FIGS. 13-16 are side and rear views of a force directing member of the transverse coupler of FIG. 2 and the adjustment arm of FIG. 9 at various angulations, according to some embodiments.

[0018] FIGS. 17-19 show the transverse coupler of FIG. 2 at various stages of realignment, according to some embodiments.

[0019] FIG. 20 is an isometric view of an alternative embodiment of a transverse coupler of the system of FIG. 1, according to some embodiments.

[0020] FIGS. 21-23 show top, side, and a rear views, respectively, of the transverse coupler of FIG. 20, according to some embodiments.

[0021] FIG. 24 is an isometric view of an alternative embodiment of a transverse coupler of the system of FIG. 1, according to some embodiments.

[0022] FIG. 25 is an isometric view of an alternative embodiment of a transverse coupler of the system of FIG. 1, according to some embodiments.

[0023] FIG. 26 is a perspective view of the transverse coupler of FIG. 25 with some features not shown to facilitate understanding, according to some embodiments.

[0024] FIGS. 27-29 show the transverse coupler of FIG. 25 at various stages of realignment, according to some embodiments.

[0025] Various embodiments have been shown by way of example in the drawings and are described in detail below. As stated above, the intention, however, is not to limit the invention by providing such examples.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0026] Some embodiments relate to a spinal correction and fusion system for implantation into a patient, as well as associated methods and devices, where the system provides for lateral translational corrective force(s) and/or derotational corrective force(s) on a spinal column with associated instrumentation (e.g., for facilitating vertebral fusion at a selected region of the spine). Some features of the system optionally include implementation of a first, relatively longer rod for correction and stabilization, a second, shorter rod for secondary spinal correction and stabilization. If desired, the stabilization helps promote a fusion. In some embodiments, the spine retains freedom of motion above and below the spinal segment corresponding to the shorter rod, with the first, relatively longer rod remaining implanted. In other embodiments, the first, relatively longer rod is removed following correction and stabilization of the spinal column. A variety of additional or alternative features and advantages of the inventive systems are contemplated and provided by the instant disclosure. As used herein, the phrase "as shown" is indicative of a feature or features shown in the accompanying drawings,

although as noted it should be understood that additional or alternative features to those shown are contemplated.

[0027] Various planes and associated directions are referenced in the following description, including a sagittal plane defined by two axes, one drawn between a head (superior) and tail (inferior) of the body and one drawn between a back (posterior) and front (anterior) of the body; a coronal plane defined by two axes, one drawn between a center (medial) to side (lateral) of the body and one drawn between a head (superior) and tail (inferior) of the body; and a transverse plane defined by two axes, one drawn between a back and front of the body and one drawing between a center and side of the body. The terms pitch, roll, and yaw are also used, where roll generally refers to angulation, or rotation, in a first plane through which a longitudinal axis of a body orthogonally passes (e.g., rotation about a longitudinal axis corresponding to the spinal column), pitch refers to angulation, or rotation, in a second plane orthogonal to the first plane, and yaw refers to angulation, or rotation, in a third plane orthogonal to the first and second planes. In some embodiments, pitch is angulation in the sagittal plane, yaw is angulation in the coronal plane, and roll is angulation in the transverse plane.

[0028] In various embodiments, changes in pitch, yaw, and/or roll occur concurrently or separately as desired. Moreover, as used herein, “lateral translation” is not limited to translation in the medial-lateral direction unless specified as such.

[0029] FIG. 1 shows a spinal correction system 10, according to some embodiments. As shown, the system 10 includes a first rod 12, a second rod 14, a plurality of anchors, including a first stabilizing anchor 16, a second stabilizing anchor 18, a third stabilizing anchor 20, a fourth stabilizing anchor 22, a fifth stabilizing anchor 23, a sixth stabilizing anchor 25, a first anchor 24, a second anchor 26, a third anchor 28, a fourth anchor 30, a first transverse coupler 32, a second transverse coupler 34, and a plurality of fasteners 36, such as bone screws or pedicle screws, for securing components of the system 10 to a spine 40 having a first side 40A and a second side 40B.

[0030] The system 10 is optionally used to bring the spine 40 to a more natural curvature (e.g., prior to or as a part of a single adjustment or multiple adjustments). In some embodiments, an abnormal curvature in the spinal column 40 has been adjusted to a more natural curvature using other instrumentation, prior to or in conjunction with securing portions of the system 10 to the spinal column 40. In some embodiments, the system 10 is adapted to provide means for leveraged correction, with translation and derotation of the spine 40. If desired, the system 10 is adapted to provide means for selective fusion of the spine 40 following correction. In other embodiments, the system 10 provides means for maintaining a correction to facilitate spinal remodeling in the absence of substantial vertebral fusion (e.g., without permanent vertebral fusion or without any vertebral fusion).

[0031] Although the system 10 is shown in FIG. 1 with a selected number of components, such as six stabilizing anchors 16, 18, 20, 22, 23, 25, four anchors 24, 26, 28, 30, two transverse couplers 32, 34, more or fewer components are implemented as appropriate. For example, in some embodiments, the system 10 includes the first rod 12, the second rod 14, a single transverse coupler, such as the first transverse coupler 32, and a first anchor, such as the first anchor 24, with the first rod 12 secured by the first transverse coupler 32 and

the second rod 14 secured between the first transverse coupler 32 and the first anchor 24. A variety of other configurations are also contemplated.

[0032] As shown in FIG. 1, the first rod 12, also described as an elongate member, is secured to the spinal column 40 at a pre-selected offset from a longitudinal axis of the spinal column 40. For example, the first rod 12 is optionally secured at an offset along a medial-lateral axis ML, or right-left axis, and anterior-posterior axis AP, or back-front axis. In some embodiments, the first rod 12 is secured on the left side of the spinal column 40 as shown. As subsequently described, the offset is optionally selected to cause at least a relative lateral translation (e.g., central or medial movement and/or anterior-posterior movement) and derotational shift (e.g., about a central axis of the spine) of selected vertebrae such that the spinal column 40 exhibits a more natural position.

[0033] The first rod 12 is elongate and cylindrical and includes a superior portion 50, an intermediate portion 52, and an inferior portion 54, according to some embodiments. The first rod 12 is adapted, or otherwise structured, as desired, to extend along the spinal column 40. The first rod 12 is optionally contoured to complement a desired spinal curvature. In some embodiments, the first rod 12 is substantially rigid, defining a substantially round cross-section with a mean diameter of about 6 mm and being formed of a suitable biocompatible material, such as titanium alloy ASTM F136, or cobalt chromium alloy ASTM F1537 or any other suitable implantable material. If desired, the first rod 12 incorporates some flex, or springiness while substantially rigidly retaining its shape. Though some material examples have been provided, the first rod 12 is optionally formed of a variety of materials, such as stainless steel or suitable polymeric materials and a variety of cross-sectional shapes.

[0034] The first rod 12 has a longitudinal axis X1—where the rod 12 is substantially straight, the longitudinal axis X1 is substantially straight and, where the rod 12 is substantially curved or angled, the longitudinal axis X1 is similarly curved or angled. The sections 50, 52, 54 of the first rod 12 are optionally continuously formed or are formed as separate, connected parts as desired. Expandable rod designs are also contemplated.

[0035] As shown in FIG. 1, the second rod 14 is substantially shorter than the first rod 12. For example, the second rod 14 is optionally configured to extend along an apical region of the spine 40 and/or between a desired number of anchors, such as the first and second anchors 24, 26. The second rod 14 is optionally formed of similar materials and with similar cross-section(s) to that of the first rod 12, as desired.

[0036] As shown in FIG. 1, the first stabilizing anchor 16 and the first anchor 24 are adapted, or otherwise structured, to be mounted, or fixed to one or more vertebrae, such as vertebrae 41 and 42 located at or near inferior and apical regions, respectively, along the spine 40. Additional examples of stabilizing anchors and anchors in accordance with some embodiments of the system 10 are set forth in U.S. application Ser. No. 13/301,514, filed on Nov. 21, 2011 and entitled TRANSVERSE CONNECTOR FOR SPINAL STABILIZATION SYSTEM, the entire contents of which are hereby incorporated by reference.

[0037] FIGS. 2 to 4 show the first transverse coupler 32 (also described as an anchor or connector) of the system 10, according to some embodiments. As shown in FIG. 2, the first transverse coupler 32 is adapted, or otherwise structured, to be positioned laterally across a vertebra, such as the first

apical vertebra 42 (FIG. 1) located at or near the apex of the defective curvature along the spine 40. As shown, the first transverse coupler 32 is designed to extend, either partially or fully, from the first side 40A of the spine 40 to the second side 40B of the spine 40.

[0038] FIGS. 2 and 3 provide isometric views of the first transverse coupler 32, according to some embodiments. As shown, the first transverse coupler 32 is adapted, or otherwise structured, to receive the first rod 12, such that the first rod 12 is secured laterally relative to a portion of the first transverse coupler 32. In some embodiments, the first rod 12 is substantially prevented from translating in a direction generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis X1 at a first pivot point P1 while the rod 12 is able to slide axially, or translate axially, along the longitudinal axis X1 through the first pivot point P1 and also to change in pitch and yaw about the first pivot point P1.

[0039] In some embodiments, the first transverse coupler 32 is adapted, or otherwise structured, to substantially limit rotation, or roll, of the first rod 12 about the longitudinal axis X1 of the first rod 12. According to some embodiments, the first transverse coupler 32 provides a means for allowing the rod 12 to angulate without substantial lateral translation relative to the portion of the first transverse coupler 32 and without substantial rotation about the longitudinal axis X1.

[0040] In some embodiments, the first transverse coupler 32 provides a means for selectively locking the first rod 12 to substantially prevent changes in axial translation, pitch, yaw, and/or roll. The selective locking feature is optionally suitable for constraining movement of the rod 12 under conditions associated with implantation of the system 10 and/or under conditions associated with spinal loading of the system 10 following implantation and securement of the system to the spine 40.

[0041] The first transverse coupler 32 is optionally adapted secured to an anchor point on the second side of the spine. In some embodiments, the transverse coupler 32 is secured to an anchor point on the second side 40B of the spine 40 where the anchor point is a spinal anchor directly secured to a vertebral body (not shown). For example, the spinal anchor is optionally a pedicle screw, hook or clamp. In some embodiments, the transverse coupler 32 is secured to an anchor point on the second side 40B of the spine 40 where the anchor point includes a rod coupler configured to be secured to a second rod 14 extending longitudinally along a second side 40B of a spine 40.

[0042] In some embodiments, the first transverse coupler 32 is adapted to receive the second rod 14 such that the second rod 14 is secured laterally against lateral translation relative to a portion of the first transverse coupler 32. In some embodiments, the second rod 14 is substantially prevented from translating in a direction substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis X2 at a second pivot point P2. In turn, in some embodiments, the second rod 14 is able to slide axially, or translate axially, along a second longitudinal axis X2, relative to the first transverse coupler 32 through a second pivot point P2. The second rod 14 is optionally able to change in pitch and yaw about the second pivot point P2.

[0043] The first transverse coupler 32 is optionally adapted, or otherwise structured, to substantially limit rotation, or roll, of the second rod 14 about the second longitudinal axis X2 of the second rod 14. The first transverse coupler 32 provides means for allowing the second rod 14 to angulate without substantial lateral translation relative to the portion of the first

transverse coupler 32 and without substantial rotation about the second longitudinal axis X2, according to some embodiments.

[0044] In some embodiments, the first transverse coupler 32 provides a means for selectively locking the second rod 14 to substantially prevent changes in axial translation, pitch, yaw, and/or roll. The selective locking feature is optionally suitable for constraining movement of the rod 14 under conditions associated with implantation of the system 10 and/or under conditions associated with spinal loading of the system 10 following implantation and securement of the system to the spine 40.

[0045] The first transverse coupler 32 is optionally formed of suitable biocompatible metallic materials, such as titanium, titanium alloy ASTM F136, stainless steel, cobalt chromium alloy ASTM F1537, and/or suitable biocompatible polymeric materials, such as PEEK and/or composite materials.

[0046] FIG. 4 is an exploded view of the first transverse coupler 32. As shown, the first transverse coupler 32 includes an adjustment assembly 60 (also described as an adapter or adjuster) adapted to be secured to a first rod 12 extending longitudinally along a first side 40A of the spine 40. According to some embodiments, the adjustment assembly 60 includes a rider 66, an adjustment retainer 70, and a first rod coupler 72 to receive the first rod 12. As shown, the first transverse coupler 32 also includes an adjustment arm 62 adapted to be secured to the second rod 14 and extends from the first side 40A of the spine 40 to a second side 40B of the spine 40, as well as a force directing member 64 having an elongate body 74 adapted to extend between the adjustment assembly 60 and the adjustment arm 62.

[0047] As subsequently described, in some embodiments, the first rod coupler 72 is a multi-piece design (e.g. as shown in FIGS. 2-8). In other embodiments, the first rod coupler 72 is a single-piece design adapted, or otherwise structured, for receiving the first rod 12 (FIGS. 25-26).

[0048] As shown in FIG. 4, the adjustment assembly 60 connects to the force directing member 64 and the first rod 12, which extends along the first side 40A of the spine 40. As shown in FIG. 1 and FIGS. 13-16, the adjustment assembly 60 and force directing member 64 are optionally adapted to be positioned on the first side 40A of the spine 40. In some embodiments, the adjustment arm 62 is adapted to span across a portion of the first apical vertebra 42 (e.g., lamina-to-lamina or pedicle-to-pedicle on a single vertebra).

[0049] FIGS. 5-8 show features of the adjustment assembly 60. As shown, the adjustment assembly 60 has a first rod coupler 72, a rider 66 (also described as a slider or adjuster), and an adjustment retainer 70, also described as a fastener or tightener (see FIGS. 7 and 8).

[0050] As shown in FIGS. 4-6, the first rod coupler 72 of the adjustment assembly 60 includes a body 82 and a sleeve insert 84. In some embodiments, the body 82 defines a sleeve aperture 88 extending through a first side 93 of the body 82 to a second side 94 of the body 82. The sleeve aperture 88 is configured for receiving the sleeve insert 84, according to some embodiments. In some embodiments, the sleeve aperture 88 is adapted to mate with the sleeve insert 84, the sleeve insert 84 forming a revolute, substantially concave articulation surface 86. In some embodiments, the sleeve insert 84 forms a revolute, substantially convex articulation surface 90 that complements the sleeve aperture 88. The body 82 has

also optionally has a pin chase **92** (e.g. a cylindrical through hole) that extends from the outer surface **96** of the body **82** to the articulation surface **86**.

[0051] FIG. 7 is a top plan view of the adjustment assembly **60** showing some of the internal features of the body **82**. As shown, the concave articulation surface **86** of the aperture **88** is adapted, or otherwise structured, to form a substantially complementary fit with the sleeve insert **84**. In some embodiments, the sleeve insert **84** is able to be captured by the body **82** within the aperture **88** and have relative angular movement with respect to the body **82**.

[0052] In some embodiments, the sleeve insert **84** has a passage **98** defining a pivot point P1 through which a portion of the first rod **12** is able to be received. As shown, the pivot point P1 is defined in the passage, where, upon assembly, the first rod **12** passes through the first pivot point P1 such that the longitudinal axis X1 of the rod **12** at the first pivot point P1 is generally concentric with the center of the passage.

[0053] As shown, the sleeve insert **84** has a smooth bore **100** for receiving the first rod **12**. In some embodiments, the sleeve insert **84** is adapted to help allow the first rod **12** to pass through the passage **98** at the first pivot point P1, where the passage **98** helps allow the rod **12** to angulate about the longitudinal axis X1 at the first pivot point P1 (shown in FIGS. 2, 3, 6, and 8) while rotation and lateral translation of the first rod **12** with respect to the first rod coupler **72** is substantially limited in all planes. In alternative terms, the first rod coupler **72** of the adjustment assembly **60** is configured to be substantially laterally constrained by a first rod **12** when the first rod coupler **72** receives the first rod **12**. The first rod coupler **72** selectively locks rotation of the first rod **12** while helping to allow the first rod **12** to axially translate through the first rod coupler **72** and to pivot in pitch and yaw at the first pivot point P1, according to some embodiments.

[0054] As shown in FIGS. 4, 6, and 8, in some embodiments, the body **82** also includes a first protrusion **102** (e.g., a pin) or protrusions (not shown) that extend inwardly into the aperture **88** from the articulation surface **86**. The first protrusion **102** is optionally a pin with a head **104**, a neck **106**, and a body **108**, the neck **106** being located between the head **104** and the body **108** (see FIG. 4). The head **104**, the neck **106**, and the body **108** are optionally substantially cylindrical with the head **104** having a greater diameter than the body **108** and the body **108** having a greater diameter than the neck **106**. The first protrusion **102** is optionally received in the pin chase **92** such that the head **104** projects into the aperture **88**. In some embodiments the first protrusion **102** and/or body **108** is press fit into the pin chase **92** and/or welded, adhered, or otherwise secured within the pin chase **92**. In some embodiments, the first protrusion is temporary and is removable in association with an implantation procedure, providing temporary prevention of roll of the sleeve insert **84** within the body **82** before, during, and/or after securing the system **10** to the spine **40**, for example.

[0055] As shown, the body of the first rod coupler **72** also includes a locking portion **120**. In some embodiments, the locking portion **120** has an upper portion **122** and a lower portion **124** separated by a gap **126** (FIG. 6). In some embodiments, the upper portion **122** has a through slot **125** (FIG. 6) that helps allow a locking member **128** (e.g., a male threaded bolt) to slidably pass through the upper portion **122**. The lower portion **124** optionally has a bore (e.g., a female threaded bore), at least partially extending through the lower portion **124**. The upper portion **122** and the lower portion **124**

can optionally be locked, or clamped, together with the locking member **128** secured across the gap **126**. In some embodiments, the locking portion **120** of the first rod coupler **72** is adapted to lock the sleeve insert **84** within the body **82** of the first rod coupler **72**.

[0056] In some embodiments, the locking portion **120** is adapted to lock the first rod **12** to the first rod coupler **72**. As shown in FIG. 4, the sleeve insert **84** has a gap **132** that facilitates locking of the sleeve insert **84** onto the first rod **12**. For example, in some implementations, upon sufficiently tightening the locking member **128**, the sleeve insert **84** is locked onto rod **12** to arrest axial translation of the rod **12** through the sleeve insert **84**. In some implementations, the locking action of the body **82** on the sleeve insert **84** arrests changes in pitch and yaw. In different terms, the rod **12** is able to be selectively locked relative to the first transverse coupler **32** to substantially prevent changes in axial translation, pitch, yaw, and/or roll as desired.

[0057] The first rod coupler **72** defines a rod pivot point P1 and is optionally configured to be transitioned from an unlocked state in which a first rod **12** received by the first rod coupler **72** is able to axially translate and change in pitch and yaw about the first rod pivot point P1 to a locked state in which the first rod **12** received by the first rod coupler **72** is locked against axial translation and changes in pitch and yaw about the rod pivot point. When the first rod coupler **72** receives the first rod **12**, the first rod coupler **72** is substantially laterally constrained by the first rod, according to some embodiments.

[0058] As shown in FIGS. 5-8, the rider **66** (also described as slider or adjuster) includes a first surface **110** and a second surface **112** connected by a lateral wall **114**. In some embodiments, the rider **66** is substantially oval-shaped and extends from the lower portion **124** of the locking portion **120**. As shown, the first surface **110** of the rider **66** faces generally away from the adjustment arm **62**. During operation, the adjustment retainer **70** abuts the first surface **110** of the rider **66** and moves the rider **66** along the force directing member **64**, according to some embodiments. Although the adjustment retainer **70** is shown on the rider **66**, it should be understood that the adjustment retainer **70** and the rider **66** are not a single unit, but are separate, relatively moveable components, according to some embodiments. As shown, the second surface **112** of the rider **66** faces generally toward the adjustment arm **62**. During operation, the second surface **112** of the rider **66** engages with the adjustment arm **62** when the adjustment assembly **60** is moved along the force directing member **64** and brought in contact with the adjustment arm **62**, according to some embodiments.

[0059] As shown in FIG. 6, the rider **66** also includes a slot **116** extending through the rider **66** from the first surface **110** to the second surface **112**. As shown, the slot **116**, also described as an articulation aperture, has an elongate transverse cross-section. In some embodiments, the slot **116** is configured to receive the elongate body **74** of the force directing member **64** such that the elongate body **74** of the force directing member **64** is adjustable within the slot **116** in the direction in which the slot **116** is elongated. In operation, the rider **66** is optionally moveable along the force directing member **64** by, for example, moving the rider along the force directing member. The slot **116** is optionally configured to help allow the force directing member **64** extend through the rider **66** at a substantially orthogonal angle relative to the second surface of the rider **66**, as well as a variety of additional angles as desired. For example, the slot **116** is option-

ally configured to help allow the force directing member 64 to angulate, or pivot, within the slot 116 such that the force directing member extends through a plurality of angles (e.g., orthogonal and non-orthogonal) relative to the second surface 112 of the rider 66. In some embodiments, the slot 116 is configured to allow the force directing member 64, but not the adjustment retainer 70 to extend through the slot 116 of the rider 66. Consequently, the adjustment retainer 70 abuts the first surface 110 of the rider 66 adjacent the slot 116 and does not extend through the slot 116 of the rider 66, according to some embodiments.

[0060] As shown in FIGS. 7 and 8, the adjustment retainer 70 is configured to couple to the force directing member 64. The adjustment retainer 70 is configured to travel along the force directing member 64 in a direction of a central axis defined by the elongate body 74 of the force directing member 64 as desired. In some embodiments, the adjustment retainer 70 is a threaded cap 130 (e.g., a female threaded nut) configured to mate with and be screwed down the length of the force directing member 64, pressing against the rider 66, and thereby helping to move the rider 66 along the force directing member 64 as the adjustment retainer 70 is actuated along the force directing member 64.

[0061] FIGS. 2-4 show features of the force directing member 64 (also described as a connector), according to some embodiments. In some embodiments, the force directing member 64 includes the elongate body 74 and extends from a first end 140 and a second end 142. In other embodiments, the elongate body includes a head portion with a pocket configured to receive a rod, for example, a rod-shaped portion of the rider and/or adjustment arm (not shown). In some embodiments, the force directing member 64 includes a threaded, elongate body 74 adapted to mate with the threaded cap 130 of the adjustment retainer 70. Alternatively, in some embodiments, the elongate body 74 has teeth, barbs or stepped features along the elongate body 74 adapted to mate with teeth, barbs, or complementary features of the adjustment retainer 70. Some examples of the force directing member 64 optionally include, but are not limited to, a threaded screw, a standard bolt, a toggle bolt, a female threaded partial tube, a cable tie, a zip tie, a peg fastener or other type of selectively adjustable mechanism.

[0062] The first end 140 of the force directing member 64 is optionally adapted to be received within an aperture 144, also described as an articulation aperture or a socket, of the adjustment arm 62. In some embodiments, the first end 140 of the force directing member 64 is adapted to allow the force directing member 64 to change in pitch, yaw and roll from within the aperture 144. As shown in FIG. 2, the first end 140 is generally spherically shaped and is adapted to fit within the aperture 144. In some embodiments, the first end 140 of the force directing member 64 is adapted to substantially limit the force directing member 64 from substantially changing in pitch, yaw and roll from within the aperture 144. The first end 140 of the force directing member 64 is optionally a generally polygon-shaped end. For example, a force directing member 64 with a square-end, when fit into a complementary polygon-shaped aperture of the adjustment arm 62, is substantially prevented from changing in pitch, yaw, and roll from within the aperture. Alternatively, a force directing member can optionally include a cylinder-end, e.g. a T-shaped first end, which when fit into a complementary shaped aperture of

the adjustment arm 62, is substantially prevented from changing in pitch, but allows changes in yaw and roll from within the aperture.

[0063] The force directing member 64 is adapted to be secured to the adjustment assembly 60 and the adjustment arm 62 such that the elongate body 74 of the force directing member 64 extends between the rider 66 of the adjustment assembly 60 and the adjustment arm 62, according to some embodiments. The first force directing member 64 has the elongate body 74 optionally defining an effective length L (FIGS. 13 and 14) between the rider 66 of the adjustment assembly 60 and the adjustment arm 62. Alternatively, the elongate body 74 may optionally define the effective length L as the distance between a second surface 112 of the rider 66 and the first end 140 of the force directing member 64 (not shown). The effective length L is dependent on the position of the adjustment retainer 70 along the force directing member 64, according to some embodiments. An effective angle α (FIGS. 17 and 19) between the force directing member 64 and a first surface 160 (shown in FIG. 9) of the adjustment arm 62 is optionally dependent on the position of the first and second rods 12, 14. As the adjustment retainer 70 is engaged, or rotated clockwise (for right hand threaded components), along the force directing member 64, the effective length L is shortened and the angle α is increased as desired (for example, see α_1 in FIG. 17). If the adjustment retainer 70 is disengaged, or rotated counter-clockwise (for right hand threaded components), the effective length L is lengthened and the angle α is decreased as desired (for example, see α_2 in FIG. 19). Although a screw, or threaded, adjustment mechanism is shown, a variety of alternative adjustment mechanisms (e.g., a pawl and ratchet system) are contemplated.

[0064] FIGS. 9-12 show features of the adjustment arm 62 (also described as a transverse connector or arm), according to some embodiments. The adjustment arm 62 is optionally configured to extend from a first side 40A of the spine 40 to a second side 40B of the spine 40. As shown, the adjustment arm 62 includes a second rod coupler 150, a connecting portion 152, and a base portion 154, the adjustment arm having a first end 156, a second end 158, the first surface 160, a second surface 162, and a longitudinal axis X3 extending from the first end 156 to the second end 158.

[0065] As shown, the connecting portion 152 of the adjustment arm 62 has an elongate body 164 that extends from the base portion 154 to the second rod coupler 150. In some embodiments, the first surface 160 of the adjustment arm 62 faces generally toward the adjustment assembly 60 and the second surface 162 of the adjustment arm 62 faces generally away the adjustment assembly 60. In operation, the first surface 160 of the adjustment arm 62 also engages with the adjustment assembly 60 when the adjustment assembly 60 is moved along the force directing member 64 and brought in contact with the adjustment arm 62, according to some embodiments.

[0066] FIG. 9 is a side view of the adjustment arm 62, according to some embodiments. As shown, the second end 158 of the adjustment arm 62 includes the second rod coupler 150, which is configured to be secured to a second rod 14 extending longitudinally along a second side 40B of a spine 40. In some embodiments, the second rod coupler 150 of the adjustment arm 62 is substantially similar to the first rod coupler 72 of the adjustment assembly 60, with the exception that the second rod coupler 150 receives the second rod 14.

The second rod coupler **150** of the adjustment arm **62** is optionally configured to substantially limit roll of the second rod **14** where the second rod **14** is received by the second rod coupler **150**. As shown in FIG. 9, the second rod coupler **150** is adapted to be substantially laterally constrained by the second rod **14** with the second rod **14** being able to axially translate through the second rod coupler **150** and to pivot in pitch and yaw at the second rod coupler **150** at a second pivot point P2.

[0067] As shown in FIG. 4, a body **168** of the second rod coupler **150** also includes a second protrusion **166** (e.g., a pin) or protrusions (not shown) that extends inwardly into the aperture from the articulation surface **148**. In some embodiments, the second protrusion **166** is substantially similar to the first protrusion **102** of the first rod coupler **72**, discussed previously herein, and substantially prevents a sleeve insert **182** from rolling within the body **168** of the second rod coupler **150**.

[0068] As shown in FIG. 9, the second rod coupler **150** of the adjustment arm **62** includes a locking mechanism similar to the first rod coupler **72**. In some embodiments, the locking portion **170** has a first portion **172** and a second portion **174** separated by a gap **176**. The first portion **172** and the second portion **174** can be locked, or clamped, together with the locking member **180** is secured into a through slot **178** and across the gap **176**, according to some embodiments. As shown, the sleeve insert **182** also has a gap **184** (FIG. 4) that facilitates locking of the sleeve insert **182** onto the second rod **14**. For example, upon sufficiently tightening the locking member **180**, the sleeve insert **182** is optionally locked onto rod **14** to substantially arrest axial translation of the second rod **14** through the sleeve insert **182**. In some embodiments, the locking action of the body **168** of the second rod coupler **150** on the sleeve insert **182** substantially arrests changes in pitch and yaw. In different terms, the second rod **14** is able to be selectively locked relative to the first transverse coupler **32**, in accordance with some embodiments. The selective locking feature is optionally suitable for constraining movement of the rod **14** under conditions associated with implantation of the system **10** and/or under conditions associated with spinal loading of the system **10** following implantation and securement of the system to the spine **40**.

[0069] As mentioned previously and as shown in FIGS. **10** and **11**, the first end **156** of the adjustment arm **62** includes an articulation aperture **144** extending from the first surface **160** to the second surface **162**. In some embodiments, the articulation aperture **144** is adapted to receive the force directing member. The articulation aperture **144** has a revolute, substantially concave inner surface with an elongate opening extending in the direction of the longitudinal axis X3 (FIGS. **10-12**).

[0070] As shown in FIGS. **13-16**, the elongate body **74** of the force directing member **64** extends from the first surface **160** of the adjustment arm **62** at an angle relative to the longitudinal axis X3. In some embodiments, the force directing member **64** extends from first surface **160** of the adjustment arm **62** at an adjustable angle relative to the longitudinal axis X3. The angle may be, for example, optionally adjusted to any angle between 0 to 90 degrees. In some embodiments, the force directing member **64** is rigidly secured to the first end **156** of the adjustment arm **62** and extends from the first surface **160** of the adjustment arm **62** at a substantially fixed angle relative to the longitudinal axis. In some embodiments, the elongate body **74** of the force directing member **64**

extends from the first surface **160** of the adjustment arm **62** at a substantially orthogonal angle relative to the longitudinal axis X3.

[0071] In some embodiments, the spherically shaped first end **140** of the force directing member **64** fits within an articulation aperture **144**. The first end **140** of the force directing member **64** is optionally received within the articulation aperture **144** (FIGS. **10** and **11**) of the adjustment arm **62** such that the force directing member **64** is able to angulate. In some embodiments, the force directing member **64** is substantially free to angulate in a first plane of angulation A1 (FIGS. **13** and **15**) to a greater degree than in other planes of angulation (e.g., a second plane of angulation A2 as shown in FIGS. **14** and **16**). The first plane of angulation A1 is depicted as a line (FIGS. **14** and **16**). The first plane A1 is defined by the longitudinal axis X3 and the normal axis X4 of the transverse coupler, both falling within the first plane A1. The first plane A1 is generally orthogonal to the second plane A2 while being generally parallel to the longitudinal axis X3 and the normal axis X4. The second plane of angulation A2 is depicted as a line (FIGS. **13** and **15**), where the first plane A1 extends orthogonally from the second plane A2. The normal axis X4 falls within the second plane A2, the normal axis X4 being generally parallel the second plane A2. In some embodiments, the force directing member **64** is substantially free to angulate in a single plane of angulation (e.g., the first plane A1) or multiple planes of angulation (e.g., the first plane A1 and the second plane A2) as desired.

[0072] In some embodiments, the force directing member **64** is received within the articulation aperture of the adjustment arm **62** such that the force directing member **64** is able to angulate. The force directing member **64** is able to optionally articulate in a first plane of angulation A1 to a greater extent than the force directing member **64** is able to angulate in a second plane of angulation A2 that is substantially perpendicular to the first plane of angulation. In some embodiments, the force directing member **64** has an angulation range of 90 degree, wherein the force directing member **64** is able to articulate through an angle of about 45 degrees or more in the first plane of angulation A1. The force directing member **64** optionally articulates in the first plane of angulation A1 and is substantially prevented from articulating in the second plane of angulation A2. It is also contemplated that the force directing member **64** is able to articulate in a multiple planes of angulation, according to some embodiments.

[0073] FIGS. **17-19** show a view of the system **10** taken in a transverse plane to the spine **40** near the apex of the defective curvature, with some inferior and superior portions of the spine **40** and system **10** not shown to simplify illustration. As shown, the transverse coupler **32** is secured to the first apical vertebra **42** and to the first and the second rods **12**, **14**. In sequentially viewing the Figures, it can be seen that during operation, the vertebrae **42** is laterally translated and derotated while the transverse coupler **32** is being adjusted, according to some methods of using the system **10**. After the adjustment, the first apical vertebra **42** is then locked against further rotation or lateral movement by locking the transverse coupler **32** to both the first and the second rods **12**, **14**, according to some embodiments. FIGS. **17** and **18** show the vertebra **42** in an uncorrected state, or a partially derotated and laterally offset state with the first and the second rods **12**, **14** secured in first and the second rod couplers **72**, **150** of the first transverse coupler **32**.

[0074] In order to secure the first rod 12 onto the spine 40, the first and second stabilizing anchors 16, 18 are optionally secured at an inferior spinal position, or level, (e.g., to an inferior vertebrae) and a superior spinal position, or level (e.g., to a superior vertebrae), respectively. In some embodiments, the first rod 12 is substantially laterally constrained by the first and second stabilizing anchors 16, 18 such that the first rod 12 extends longitudinally on the first side 40A of the spine 40 and is laterally constrained relative to the inferior and superior vertebrae.

[0075] The second rod 14 is optionally secured on an opposite side of the spine at intermediate positions along the spine by a first intermediate anchor and a second intermediate anchor, for example. The first and second intermediate anchors are adapted to substantially constrain the second rod 14 against substantial lateral translation as desired. The first intermediate anchor (e.g., the fifth stabilizing anchor 23 as shown in FIG. 1) is optionally secured to a first, intermediate vertebrae and a second, intermediate vertebrae, each located between the superior and inferior vertebrae to which the first and second stabilizing anchors are secured. In some embodiments, the first and second intermediate anchors are secured to vertebral bodies located on or adjacent vertebral bodies that form an apex, or apical region of the deformity. As shown in FIG. 1, with the spine 40 in a generally corrected state, the first intermediate anchor is positioned at a lower vertebral position, or level than the adjustment assembly 60 and at a higher vertebral position, or level than the first stabilizing anchor 16. In turn, the second intermediate anchor (e.g., the sixth stabilizing anchor 25), is optionally positioned along the spine 40 at a higher vertebral position, or level along the second rod 14 between the adjustment assembly 60 and the second stabilizing anchor 18.

[0076] In order to assemble the transverse coupler 32 onto the system 10 (FIG. 1), a physician can optionally articulate components of the transverse coupler 32 (e.g. the force directing member 64 and the adjustment assembly 60), such that the rod couplers 72, 150 of the transverse coupler 32 are able to reach the first and the second rods 12, 14. Alternatively or additionally, a physician or other user can optionally employ a variety of tools and associated methods. For example, the user can optionally use a surgical tool, such as a wrench, clamp, or gripping tool, compressor, distractor adapted to couple to the first rod 12, the second rod 14, the first transverse coupler 32, and/or other spinal devices. The tool is used to assist the physician in derotating and/or translating the spinal column 40 during a correction as desired. The tool is optionally used to assist the physician in maintaining a desired configuration while assembling the system 10 onto the spine 40.

[0077] As shown in FIG. 17, the first transverse coupler 32 is assembled onto the first apical vertebra 42. During assembly, the first and the second rod couplers 72, 150 of the first transverse coupler 32 are optionally adjusted to an unlocked state when coupled to the first and the second rods 12, 14 respectively, such that the physician has free movement as desired, when assembling the transverse coupler 32 onto the spine 40. In some embodiments, the first and the second rod couplers 72, 150 are adjusted to an unlocked state to reduce binding of the rods 12, 14 and to provide more degrees of freedom to the first transverse coupler 32 during the lateral translation and derotation of the spine.

[0078] During or after assembly, the transverse coupler 32 is optionally adjusted to a locked state onto the rods 12, 14 of

the system 10 to allow for lateral translation and derotation of the first apical vertebra 42. In some embodiments, the first and the second rods 12, 14 are generally locked against rotation roll within the corresponding couplers 72, 150 of the first transverse coupler 32, as previously discussed herein. The first rod 12 is optionally left unlocked within the first rod coupler 72 while the second rod 14 is locked against axial translation and changes in pitch and yaw within the second rod coupler 150. In some embodiments, the first rod 12 is able to change in pitch and yaw, while the second rod 14 is substantially constrained against changes in pitch, yaw, and roll during at least a portion of the correction.

[0079] In some embodiments, the first rod 12 is able to axially translate and change in pitch and yaw about the first pivot point P1 while the vertebra 42 is being laterally translated and derotated during the full duration of the correction. In other embodiments, the first rod 12 is locked against changes in pitch and yaw during a portion of the correction and/or after the correction. FIGS. 17-19 depict a use of the transverse coupler 32 such that the first rod 12 is able to change in pitch, yaw, and axial translation during a correction and is locked against changes in pitch, yaw, and axial translation after the correction, according to some embodiments.

[0080] FIG. 18 shows the first apical vertebra 42 in a partially derotated and a laterally offset state and FIG. 19 shows the first apical vertebra 42 in a maximally derotated and laterally translated state, according to some embodiments. The first transverse coupler 32 operates to laterally translate and rotate the second rod 14 towards the first rod 12 such that a portion of the spine 40 is moved into a more correct configuration, in accordance with some embodiments. For example, comparing FIG. 19 to FIG. 17, it can be seen that the distance between the first rod 12 and the second 14 has significantly shortened (identified as D1 and D2 in FIGS. 17 and 15) after the correction. Shown by an arrow in the Figures, the first transverse coupler 32 is optionally adapted to derotate the vertebra 42 and laterally translate the vertebra 42, either contemporaneously, sequentially, or combinations thereof.

[0081] FIG. 19 shows the first apical vertebra 42 maximally derotated and laterally translated. The transverse coupler 32 is optionally locked after the vertebra 42 has been laterally translated and derotated as desired (e.g., as shown in FIG. 19), to prevent relative translational and rotational movement between the first rod 12 and second rod 14 to stabilize and hold the vertebra 42 in the corrected position. Additional anchors 23, 25, 28, 30 are added to the spine 40 as desired to provide additional stability to the spine 40. In some embodiments, after the vertebra 42 has been laterally translated and/or partially derotated and the transverse coupler 32 has been locked to the rods, the adjustment retainer 70 is actuated along the force directing member 64 to derotate, or further derotate, the spine 40.

[0082] An illustrative but non-limiting example of correcting a spinal defect includes securing the first stabilizing anchor 16 at an inferior spinal position and the second stabilizing anchor 18 at a superior spinal position along the first side 40A of the spine 40. The first rod 12 is extended longitudinally on the first side 40A of the spine 40 and is substantially laterally constrained between the first and the second stabilizing anchors 16, 18, according to some embodiments.

[0083] The first anchor 24 is optionally secured at an inferior spinal position and the second anchor 26 is secured at the superior spinal position along the second side 40B of the spine 40. The second rod 14 extends longitudinally on the

second side 40B of the spine 40 and is substantially laterally constrained between the first and the second anchors 24, 26, according to some embodiments.

[0084] The first transverse coupler 32 is optionally assembled onto the first and the second sides 40A, 40B of the spinal column 40, either at some time prior to, during, or after securing the stabilizing anchors 16, 18, 24, 26 to the spine 40. In some embodiments, the transverse coupler 32 is assembled onto the first side 40A of the spine 40 by coupling the first rod coupler 72 of the adjustment assembly 60 to the first rod 12. The first rod 12 is able to axially translate and change in pitch and yaw, but is substantially restricted from lateral translation at the first rod coupler 72, according to some embodiments.

[0085] The transverse coupler 32 is optionally assembled onto the second side 40B of the spine 40 by coupling the second rod coupler 150 of the adjustment arm 62 to the second rod 14. In some embodiments, the second rod 14 is locked from axial translation and changing in pitch, yaw and roll at the second rod coupler 150. The adjustment arm 62 of the first transverse coupler 32 is positioned across the first apical vertebra 42 such that a connecting portion 152 of an adjustment arm 62 extends from the first side 40A of the spine 40 to the second side 40B of the spine 40, according to some embodiments.

[0086] As previously discussed, the first transverse coupler 32 includes the force directing member 64 that is optionally the threaded toggle bolt. The force directing member 64 is optionally secured to the adjustment assembly 60 and the adjustment arm 62 with an initial effective length.

[0087] In some embodiments, an adjustment retainer 70 is actuated along the force directing member 64 by rotating the threaded cap 130 of the adjustment retainer 70 clockwise along a threaded portion of the force directing member 64. Actuating the retainer 70 decreases the effective length L as desired. In some embodiments, the effective length L becomes approximately zero when the adjustment arm 62 becomes seated flush against the adjustment assembly 60. The force directing member 64 is optionally cut or broken off to a shorter length, as desired, during the procedure as the effective length L decreases from the initial effective length.

[0088] As the adjustment retainer 70 is optionally actuated along the force directing member 64, the rider 66 provides a resistance force that transmits through the force directing member 64 to the adjustment arm 62. In some embodiments, the resistance force causes the second rod 14 to move towards the first rod 12, which laterally translates a portion of the spine 40 towards the first rod 12.

[0089] In some embodiments, the adjustment retainer 70 is actuated along the first force directing member 64 such that the first surface 160 of the adjustment arm 62 comes into contact with the adjustment assembly 60. The adjustment retainer 70 is then optionally further actuated to pivot the rider 66 and the adjustment arm 62 towards each other such that the first surface 160 of the adjustment arm 62 becomes seated flush against the second surface 112 of the rider 66. In some embodiments, the adjustment assembly 60 receives the force directing member 64 within an articulation aperture 144 having an elongate transverse cross-section, allowing the force directing member 64 to articulate in the first plane of angulation as the adjustment retainer 70 is driven along the first force directing member 64. As the adjustment assembly 60 and the adjustment arm 62 impinge and ultimately become seated together, the force directing member 64 articulates into a generally orthogonal angle relative to the longitudinal axis

X3 defined by the adjustment arm 62, according to some embodiments. In some embodiments, as the force directing member 64 articulates, the first apical vertebra 42 derotates. Once the adjustment arm 62 and the adjustment assembly 60 are brought into the desired amount of contact or the desired effective length L of the force directing member 64 has been achieved.

[0090] FIG. 20 shows an isometric view of an alternative embodiment of a first transverse coupler 200 of the system 10, also described as a transverse connector. The first transverse coupler 200 is optionally adapted, or otherwise structured, to be positioned laterally across one or more of the vertebrae, such as the first apical vertebra 42 (FIG. 1) located at or near an apical position along the spine 40. As shown, the first transverse coupler 200 is adapted to extend from the first side 40A of the spine 40 toward, and ultimately across to the second side 40B of the spine 40.

[0091] As shown, the first transverse coupler 200 includes features that are substantially similar to the first transverse coupler 32. In some embodiments, the adjustment arm 202 is substantially similar to the adjustment arm 62 of the first transverse coupler 32, and thus various features of the adjustment arm 62 of the first transverse coupler 32 also apply to the adjustment arm 202 of the first transverse coupler 200.

[0092] As shown in FIG. 20, the first transverse coupler 200 includes an adjustment assembly 250 adapted to be secured to a first rod 12. In some embodiments, the adjustment assembly 250 includes a rider 252, an adjustment retainer 254, and a first rod coupler 256 to receive the first rod 12.

[0093] FIGS. 21-23 show a top, a side and a rear view of the first transverse coupler 200. In some embodiments, the rider 252 and the adjustment retainer 254 of the first transverse coupler 200 engage with an adjustment arm 202 and/or a force directing member 204 in a manner substantially similar to the rider 66 and adjustment retainer 70 of the first transverse coupler 32. The various features of the rider 66 and the adjustment retainer 70 of the first transverse coupler 32 also apply to the rider 252 and the adjustment retainer 254 of the first transverse coupler 200. The main difference between the first transverse coupler 200 and the first transverse coupler 32 is the first rod coupler 256, according to some embodiments.

[0094] As shown in FIGS. 20 and 23, the first rod coupler 256 includes a head portion 258 is substantially U-shaped having a first prong 262 and a second prong 264 defining a pocket 266 for receiving the first rod 12. The head portion 258 of the adjustment assembly 250 serves to couple the first transverse coupler 200 to the first rod 12. As shown, the prongs 262, 264 are threaded for receiving a clamping screw 268 adapted to engage and secure the first rod 12 immobilized within the pocket 266. The first rod coupler 256 of the adjustment assembly 250 is optionally configured to receive the first rod 12 such that the first rod 12 is free to change in at least roll within the first rod coupler 256. In some embodiments, first rod coupler 256 is configured to receive the first rod 12 such that the first rod 12 is free to change in pitch and roll, but is substantially limited from changes in yaw within the first rod coupler 256. In some embodiments, the first rod coupler 256 is configured to be transitioned from an unlocked state in which the first rod 12 is free to move in at least one of slide, pitch, yaw or roll with respect to the first rod coupler 256 to a locked state. In some embodiments, the first rod 12 is received by the first rod coupler 256 such that the first rod coupler 256 becomes substantially laterally constrained by the first rod 12. The first rod coupler 256 optionally locks the first rod 12

against axial translation, changes in pitch, yaw and roll about a rod pivot point with respect to the first rod coupler 256.

[0095] FIG. 24 provides another alternative embodiment of the first transverse coupler 300, which includes an adjustment assembly 350 adapted to be secured to a first rod 12. In some embodiments, the adjustment assembly 350 includes a rider 352, an adjustment retainer 354, and a first rod coupler 358 to receive the first rod 12. The first rod coupler 358 optionally receives the first rod 12 in a substantially similar manner to the adjustment assembly 250 of the first transverse coupler 200, and therefore various features of the adjustment assembly 250 of the first transverse coupler 200 also apply to the adjustment assembly 350 of the first transverse coupler 300. The primary difference between the first transverse coupler 300 and the first transverse coupler 200 is the design of the second rod coupler 312 of the adjustment arm 302, according to some embodiments.

[0096] As shown in FIG. 24, the adjustment arm 302 is substantially similar to the adjustment arm 62 of the first transverse coupler 32 with a difference of having a second rod coupler 312 that includes a U-shaped head portion 314. The head portion 314 is substantially U-shaped and includes a first prong 306 and a second prong 308 that defines a pocket 310 for receiving the second rod 14. The head portion 314 of the adjustment arm 302 serves to couple the first transverse coupler 300 to the second rod 14. As shown, the prongs 306, 308 are optionally threaded for receiving a clamping screw (not shown) adapted to engage and secure the second rod 14 immobilized within the pocket 310. The second rod coupler 312 receives the second rod 14 similar to how the first coupler 356 receives the second rod 14, and therefore those various features of the first rod coupler 256 are also applicable to the second rod coupler 312 with respect to the second rod 14.

[0097] FIG. 25 shows an isometric view of another first transverse coupler 400 of the system 10, also described as a fixed transverse coupler. The first transverse coupler 400 is optionally adapted, or otherwise structured, to be positioned laterally across one or more of the vertebrae, such as the first apical vertebra 42 (FIG. 1) located at or near an apical position along the spine 40. As shown, the first transverse coupler 200 is adapted to extend from the first side 40A of the spine 40 toward, and ultimately across to the second side 40B of the spine 40.

[0098] As shown, the first transverse coupler 400 includes features that are substantially similar to the first transverse coupler 32. In some embodiments, the first transverse coupler 400 includes an adjustment assembly 450 adapted to be secured to a first rod 12. In some embodiments, the adjustment assembly 450 includes a rider 452, an adjustment retainer 454, and a first rod coupler 456 to receive the first rod 12. In some embodiments, the adjustment assembly 450 is substantially similar to the adjustment assembly 60 of the first transverse coupler 32.

[0099] The first transverse coupler 400 optionally includes an adjustment arm 402 with a second rod coupler 412 adapted to be secured to the second rod 14 and extends from the first side 40A of the spine 40 to the second side 40B of the spine 40. In some embodiments, the adjustment arm 402 has a first end 406 and a second end 408 and a longitudinal axis X3 extending between the first and the second ends 406, 408. The adjustment arm 402 optionally has a first surface 414 and a second opposite surface 416 (FIG. 26).

[0100] FIG. 26 shows a view of the adjustment arm 402, with some features not shown to facilitate understanding,

which is substantially similar to the adjustment arm 62 of the first transverse coupler 32 with a difference of having a force directing member 404 rigidly secured to the first end 406 of the adjustment arm 402. In some embodiments, the force directing member 404 extends from the first surface 414 of the adjustment arm 402 at a generally orthogonal angle relative to the longitudinal axis X3. In other embodiments, the force directing member 404 extends from the first surface 414 of the adjustment arm 402 at a non-orthogonal angle relative to the longitudinal axis X3. The force directing member 404 has an elongate body 410 extending between the adjustment assembly 450 and the adjustment arm 402, according to some embodiments.

[0101] The adjustment arm 402 optionally includes an elongated portion 418 with an aperture 420 at the first end 406 of the adjustment arm 402. The aperture 420 is optionally adapted to receive at least a portion of a surgical tool that may be used during the implant procedure to obtain and hold a spinal correction.

[0102] FIGS. 27-29 show a view of the system 10 taken in a transverse plane to the spine 40 near the apex of the defective curvature, with some inferior and superior portions of the spine 40 and system 10 not shown to simplify illustration. As shown, the transverse coupler 400 is secured to the first apical vertebra 42 and to the first and the second rods 12, 14. In sequentially viewing the Figures, it can be seen that during operation, the first apical vertebra 42 is laterally translated and derotated while the transverse coupler 400 is being adjusted, according to some methods of using the system 10. FIGS. 27 and 28 show the first apical vertebra 42 in a partially derotated and a laterally offset state and FIG. 29 shows the first apical vertebra 42 maximally derotated and laterally translated.

[0103] In order to assemble the transverse coupler 400 onto the system 10 (FIG. 1), a physician can optionally angulate the adjustment assembly 450 of the transverse coupler 200 (e.g.) such that the rod couplers 456, 412 of the transverse coupler 400 are able to reach the first and the second rods 12, 14. Alternatively or additionally, a physician or other user can optionally employ a variety of tools and associated methods. For example, the user can use a surgical tool, such as a wrench, clamp, or gripping tool, adapted to couple to the first rod 12, the second rod 14, the first transverse coupler 400, and/or other spinal devices as desired. In some embodiments, the surgical tool optionally assists the physician in derotating and/or translating a spinal column 40 during a correction. The surgical tool optionally assists the physician in maintaining a desired configuration while assembling the system 10 onto the spine 40.

[0104] A spinal correction using the first transverse coupler 200 as shown in FIGS. 27-29 optionally proceeds similarly to the spinal correction using the transverse coupler 32 as shown in FIGS. 13-16.

[0105] An illustrative but non-limiting example of correcting a spinal defect using the first transverse coupler 400 is provided herein. Stabilizing anchors 16, 18, anchors 24, 26, and rods 12, 14 are optionally secured to the spine 40 using the operation as discussed previously.

[0106] The first transverse coupler 200 is assembled onto the first and the second sides 40A, 40B of the spinal column 40, either at some time prior to, during, or after securing the stabilizing anchors 16, 18, 24, 26 to the spine 40. In some embodiments, the transverse coupler 400 is assembled onto the first side 40A of the spine 40 by coupling the first rod

coupler **456** of the adjustment assembly **250** to the first rod **12**. The first rod **12** is able to axially translate and change in pitch and yaw, but is substantially restricted from translating laterally at the first rod coupler **456**, according to some embodiments.

[0107] The transverse coupler **400** is optionally assembled onto the second side **40B** of the spine **40** by coupling the second rod coupler **412** of the adjustment arm **402** to the second rod **14**. In some embodiments, the second rod **14** is locked from axial translation and changing in pitch, yaw and roll at the second rod coupler **412**. The adjustment arm **402** of the first transverse coupler **400** is positioned across the first apical vertebra **42** such that a connecting portion **422** of an adjustment arm **402** extends from the first side **40A** of the spine **40** to the second side **40B** of the spine **40**, according to some embodiments.

[0108] As previously discussed, the first transverse coupler **400** optionally has the force directing member **404** rigidly coupled to the adjustment arm **402**. In some embodiments, the adjustment retainer **454** is actuated along the force directing member **404** by rotating a threaded cap **455** of the adjustment retainer **454** clockwise along a threaded portion of the force directing member **404**. Actuating the adjustment retainer **454** decreases an effective length **L** (FIG. 27) of the force directing member **404** as desired. In some embodiments, the effective length **L** becomes approximately zero when the adjustment arm **402** becomes seated flush against the adjustment assembly **450**. In other words, actuating the retainer **454** optionally changes the distance and orientation of the rider **452** with respect to the adjustment arm **402**. In some embodiments, actuating the retainer **454** optionally couples the rider **452** to the adjustment arm **402**. The force directing member **404** is optionally cut or broken off to a shorter length, as desired, during the procedure as the effective length **L** decreases from the initial effective length.

[0109] As the adjustment retainer **454** is optionally actuated along the force directing member **404**, the rider **452** provides a resistance force that transmits through the force directing member **404** to the adjustment arm **402**. In some embodiments, the resistance force causes the second rod **14** to move towards the first rod **12**, which laterally translates a portion of the spine **40** towards the first rod **12**.

[0110] In some embodiments, the adjustment retainer **454** is actuated along the first force directing member **404** such that the first surface **414** of the adjustment arm **402** comes into contact with the adjustment assembly **450**. The adjustment retainer **454** is then optionally further actuated to pivot the rider **452** and the adjustment arm **402** towards each other such that the first surface **414** of the adjustment arm **402** becomes seated flush against a second surface **460** of the rider **452**. As the adjustment assembly **450** and the adjustment arm **402** impinge and ultimately become seated together, according to some embodiments. Once the adjustment arm **402** and the adjustment assembly **450** are brought into the desired amount of contact or the desired effective length **L** of the force directing member **404** has been achieved.

[0111] Various modifications and additions can be made to the exemplary embodiments discussed without departing from the scope of the present invention. For example, while the embodiments described above refer to particular features, the scope of this invention also includes embodiments having different combinations of features and embodiments that do not include all of the described features. Accordingly, the scope of the present invention is intended to embrace all such

alternatives, modifications, and variations as fall within the scope of the claims, together with all equivalents thereof.

What is claimed is:

1. A spinal correction system comprising:

a first rod adapted to extend longitudinally along a spine of a patient;

a force directing member defining a length and having a body that is substantially elongate and rigid;

an adjustment assembly including a rider adapted to couple to the body of the force directing member such that the rider is moveable along the body, a first rod coupler adapted to be secured to the first rod and substantially constrained by the first rod against substantial lateral translation, and an adjustment retainer adapted to be adjustably secured along the length of the force directing member; and

an adjustment arm adapted to extend from a second side of the spine toward the first side of the spine, the adjustment arm defining a first portion adapted to be secured on the second side of the spine and a second portion adapted to be coupled to the force directing member.

2. The system of claim 1, further comprising a first stabilizing anchor adapted to be secured to a vertebra at an inferior position on the first rod and a second stabilizing anchor adapted to be secured at a superior position on the first rod, each of the first and second stabilizing anchors being adapted to substantially constrain the first rod against substantial lateral translation while allowing the first rod to axially translate and change in pitch and yaw during correction.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the first rod coupler of the adjustment assembly defines a rod pivot point and is adapted to be transitioned from an unlocked state in which the first rod received by the first rod coupler is free to axially translate and change in pitch, yaw, and roll about the rod pivot point to a locked state in which the first rod received by the first rod coupler is locked against sliding and changes in pitch, yaw, and roll about the rod pivot point.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein the first rod coupler includes a head portion having a pocket for receiving the first rod.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein the first rod coupler of the adjustment assembly defines a rod pivot point and is adapted to be transitioned from an unlocked state in which the first rod received by the first rod coupler is free to axial translate and change in at least roll about the rod pivot point to a locked state in which the first rod received by the first rod coupler is locked against axial translation and changes in pitch, yaw, and roll about the rod pivot point.

6. The system of claim 1, further comprising a second rod adapted to extend longitudinally along a second side of the spine of the patient, wherein the first portion of the adjustment arm includes a second rod coupler adapted to be secured to the second rod and substantially constrain the second rod coupler against substantial lateral translation with respect to the second rod during correction.

7. The system of claim 6, wherein the second rod coupler of the adjustment arm defines a rod pivot point and is adapted to be transitioned from an unlocked state in which a second rod received by the second rod coupler is free to axial translate and change in at least roll about the rod pivot point to a locked state in which the second rod received by the second rod coupler is locked against axial translation and changes in pitch, yaw, and roll about the rod pivot point.

8. The system of claim 6, further comprising a first intermediate anchor adapted to be positioned along the second rod between the adjustment assembly and the first stabilizing anchor and a second intermediate anchor adapted to be positioned along the second rod between the adjustment assembly and the second stabilizing anchor, each of the first and second intermediate anchors being adapted to substantially constrain the second rod against substantial lateral translation.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein the first and second intermediate anchors each defines a rod pivot point and is adapted to be transitioned from an unlocked state in which the second rod received by a respective anchor is free to axially translate and change in at least roll about the rod pivot point of the respect anchor to a locked state in which the second rod received by the respective anchor is locked against sliding and changes in pitch, yaw, and roll about the rod pivot point of the respective anchor.

10. The system of claim 1, wherein the force directing member has a threaded portion and the adjustment retainer includes a threaded cap adapted to mate with the threaded portion of the force directing member.

11. The system of claim 1, wherein the adjustment arm defines a first end, a second end, a first surface, a second surface, a longitudinal axis extending from the first end to the second end, the first surface of the adjustment arm engaging with the rider and the force directing member extending from the first surface of the adjustment arm at a substantially fixed angle relative to the longitudinal axis.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein the force directing member extends from the first surface of the adjustment arm at a substantially orthogonal angle relative to the longitudinal axis.

13. The system of claim 1, wherein the adjustment arm defines a first end, a second end, a first surface, a second surface, a longitudinal axis extending from the first end to the second end, the first surface of the adjustment arm engaging with the rider and the force directing member extending from the first surface of the adjustment arm at a plurality of angles relative to the longitudinal axis.

14. The transverse coupler of claim 13, wherein the force directing member extends from first surface of the adjustment arm at an adjustable angle relative to the longitudinal axis, the adjustable angle ranging from 0 to 90 degrees relative to the longitudinal axis.

15. A method of correcting a curvature of a spine, the method comprising:

securing a first stabilizing anchor at an inferior spinal position and a second stabilizing anchor at a superior spinal position;

substantially laterally constraining a first rod between the first and second stabilizing anchors such that the first rod extends longitudinally on a first side of the spine;

securing an adjustment assembly to the first rod, the adjustment assembly including an adjustment retainer, a rider, and a first rod coupler receiving the first rod such that the rod coupler is free to change in at least roll about the first rod;

anchoring an adjustment arm to a second side of the spine such that the adjustment arm extends from the second side of the spine toward the first side of the spine; and actuating the adjustment retainer along a force directing member that extends from the adjustment arm through

the rider such that the adjustment retainer moves the rider along the force directing member and couples the rider to the adjustment arm at a plurality of angles, when reducing the spine toward the first rod.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein actuating the adjustment retainer changes the distance and orientation of the rider with respect to the adjustment arm and allows the rider to couple with the adjustment arm.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein the force directing member has a threaded portion and the adjustment retainer includes a threaded cap adapted to mate with the threaded portion of the force directing member, and further wherein actuating the adjustment retainer includes screwing the threaded cap along the threaded portion of the force directing member such that the adjustment retainer presses against the adjustment arm.

18. The method of claim 15, further comprising contacting a first surface of the adjustment arm with a surface of the rider and pivoting the adjustment arm and the rider towards each other such that the first surface of the adjustment arm becomes seated against the surface of the rider.

19. The method of claim 15, further comprising:

a first intermediate anchor adapted to be positioned along the second rod between the adjustment assembly and the first stabilizing anchor and a second intermediate anchor adapted to be positioned along the second rod between the adjustment assembly and the second stabilizing anchor, each of the first and second intermediate anchors being adapted to substantially constrain the second rod against substantial lateral translation.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein anchoring the adjustment arm to the second side of the spine includes anchoring the second rod to the second side of the spine with the first and second intermediate anchors and securing a second rod coupler of the adjustment arm to the second rod.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the adjustment retainer is actuated along the force directing member such that the force directing member reduces the adjustment arm, which in turn, reduces the distance between the first and the second rod to correct the curvature of the spine.

22. The method of claim 20, wherein the second rod is substantially locked to prevent axially translate and change in pitch, yaw, and roll at a second rod coupler of the adjustment arm during correction of the curvature of the spine.

23. The method of claim 15, wherein the force directing member is free to articulate through an angle ranging from 0 to 90 degrees in the first plane of angulation during correction.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein the force directing member is substantially prevented from articulating in a second plane of angulation during correction.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the force directing member is limited to about 10 degrees of articulation in the second plane of angulation.

26. The method of claim 15, further comprising locking the first and second rod couplers following an adjustment of a portion of the spine toward the first rod such that the first rod is substantially prevented from axially translating and changing in pitch, yaw, and roll with respect to the second rod.

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